The Saturday Review of Literature

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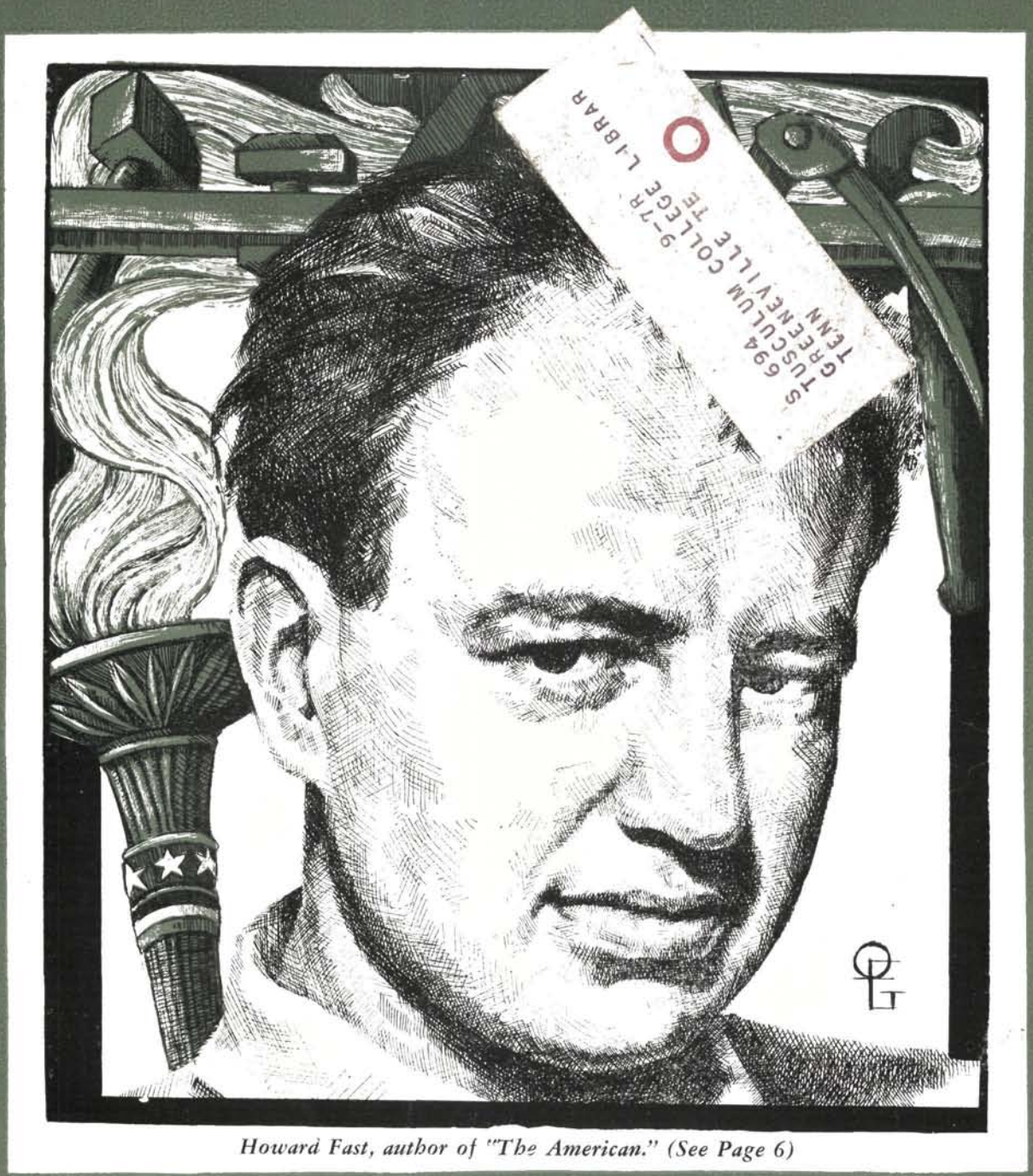

Howard Fast, author of "The American." *(See Page 6)*

One Against the Gods

By JOHN F. WHARTON

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Gentlemen . . . we thank you

GRATITUDE is a tired word. Its original innocence vanished long ago. But we of Henry Holt and Company have been wanting an opportunity to thank our friends in the business of making books for the world for a long time now, and we have decided that this is the time to do it. We were recently awarded one of the most prized citations in the book trade—the seventh annual award of the Textbook Clinic of The American Institute of Graphic Arts for progressiveness in textbook design and manufacture—and we could not have won it alone. Without the help of our business partners, our friends, we could not have conceived, executed, or presented our books to the public. And without our product—one small piece of the whole business of proffering the word in black and white—education would falter, veterans would be cheated of proper training aids, and children's opportunity for fun (and character building) would be circumscribed.

By giving the thought of a writer, his dreams and observations, to the printed page we have made room in Heaven for all the risky, sweaty, partly mechanized processes concerned with the making of books. Our business allies who carry out our designs and our manufacturing instructions, who fill our orders for cloth and paper and plate, give us the foundation upon which we stand. We are working brothers to the paper manufacturers and their dealers who provide the surface upon which our authors become articulate. We are brothers to the cloth folk who put their backs into our hard work and to the men and women who supply us with composition, plates, engravings, presswork, binding, mailing. Together, their integrity and their business experience daily transform our "Accounts Payable" into "Accounts Receivable" It is simply done. By technical skill, by believing in the need to do their respective jobs well, with economy of time though not of energy, they give us superb books. Every last partner in this business shares the triumphs. Whether our titles are successful or not, and most of them are, they are well made. Often handsome.

Because of this—because we recognize the total interdependence of our work with the work of these others—we do not feel stuffy or pompous about blowing a horn when an occasion of sufficient importance arises. In fact, we consider it our particular responsibility to do just that. Our product is an end product, the thing seen, and when we are praised for it—when we receive a special and deeply gratifying award such as this one now—we have a rare chance to pull aside the curtain and say to all these others, "We all did it, so let's all take a bow."

The American Institute of Graphic Arts, which sponsors the Annual Textbook Clinic Exhibition, is not widely known outside of publishing and the allied fields we have just mentioned. But to all of us in the business it has something of the effect produced by an intelligent report card at the end of a school year. We find out how we are doing in relation to the rest of the crowd. Books are chosen for excellence of design and manufacture by men who know the ins and outs of book production, and any publisher can be proud to have one of his titles selected. We are more than normally pleased at receiving the award for 1946 since the exhibit for this year was comprised of less than half the number of books cited in years past. Specifically, in other years the show has featured about 60 books, but for 1946, of all the textbooks published in America, only 25 were chosen. And of these 25, 5 were Holt publications. Here are their titles and a little about each one to acquaint you with them:

PORTUGUESE: The Language of Brazil, by P. Carlo Rossi. An introduction to the spoken and written language.

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN BIOLOGY, by Douglas Marsland and Charles Robert Plunkett. A complete reconstruction and modernization of Plunkett's ELEMENTS OF MODERN BIOLOGY. Illustrated.

GENETICS, by Edgar Altenburg. A college text in elementary genetics. Illustrated.

FINANCING GOVERNMENT: a Text in Public Finance, by Harold M. Groves. An authoritative, up-to-date presentation of public finance.

DON SEGUNDO SOMBRA, by Ricardo Guiraldes. Best known Latin-American novel, slightly abridged and edited with critical and linguistic introductions and notes by Ethel Williams and María Fernández.

This is a high goal to have established, but we hope to repeat and improve on it in years to come. And if we can raise the quality of our work to the level of our ideals, we count it accomplished fact.

Meanwhile, to our partners, allies and critics—cheers!

HENRY HOLT & COMPANY
257 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK 10

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The Saturday Review of Literature

One Against the Gods

JOHN F. WHARTON

"THE trouble with your generation," said Mr. Partrick, suddenly, "is that they are a lot of dull, diffident, selfish children. As one result, for 25 years the United States has been without a national ideal. Why don't *you* do something about it?"

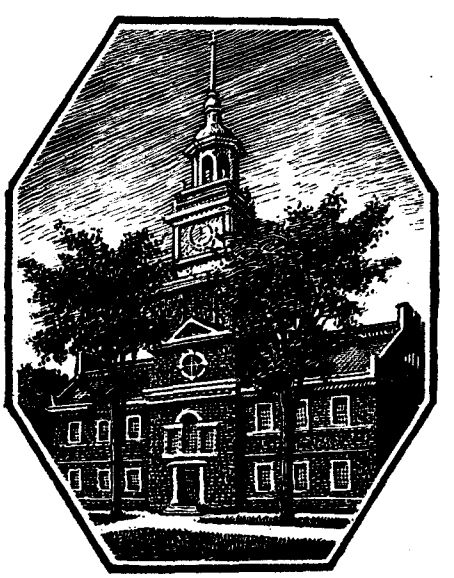
Mr. Partrick was George Barton's neighbor at his country place. He had always interested George from the day they met. He was close to 70, although physically he could have passed for a man in his fifties. He had evidently accumulated all the money he needed, a fact which George, who, in his early fifties, still lived on his earnings, envied greatly. Mr. Partrick had apparently lived for years in New York, but he now avoided it sedulously and spoke of it contemptuously as a dream land where people derived vicarious enjoyments from printed misinformation. Indeed, toward the human race in general Mr. Partrick seemed to feel continually contemptuous, although he was fond enough of various individuals. He made George think of Shaw's description of Henry Sweet; he was not an ill-natured man, but he would not suffer fools gladly.

George decided to egg him on to further discussion.

"What do you mean by 'my generation'?" he asked. "How would you define a 'national ideal'? Why should *I* do anything about it?"

"You know very well what I mean by your generation," replied Mr. Partrick. "I mean those infantile intellects now housed in bodies which are 45 to 65 years old, the men and women who fancy themselves grown up and therefore obligated to run society. What's more, they do run it. They hold most of the important political, economic, artistic, and spiritual positions, and the children, youths, and the aged pretty well have to accept the kind of society your generation hands out.

"As for a national ideal," he continued, "think back on our country's history. Naturally, I don't mean that at any time *all* of the people of any country spend *all* of their time working toward one particular goal. But in the past that small group which leavens the whole doughy mass of society constantly gave most of our people a feeling of aspiration toward something above their personal desires. In the beginning, it was political independence; then it became democracy—proving to a skeptical world that democracy could exist. Beginning with the late 1860's it was the conquest of the physical frontiers,



the melting-pot, the refuge of the oppressed. Before the turn of the century there was a glimmer of a worldwide conscience; we were outraged by the stories of how Spain treated her Western colonials, and we fought a war—a skirmish compared with later ones—to free those colonials. Finally, we embarked on the most grandiose but magnificent campaign which any nation ever undertook—to make the world safe for democracy. And for the first time we failed; we didn't achieve any part of our ideal."

"I'll say we failed," commented George. "The members of my generation started their adult lives as full-blown cynics."

"As spoiled children," answered Mr. Partrick. "My generation wasn't any better. We all behaved abominably. When we found our little friends overseas wouldn't play just the way we thought they should, we pulled away the hems of our garments and decided only ourselves were fit to associate with ourselves. Pretty soon we began to doubt if all of ourselves were worthy. Remember the Ku Klux Klan, the Black Legion, the deportation crusades? Before we knew it, the whole nation, lacking any ideal or purposeful action, went into a tailspin, and it's still there."

"The 1920's were pretty fruitful," interposed George.

"Come, now, you don't really mean that seriously," said Mr. Partrick. "We built a lot of good roads, radio stations, and some motion picture theatres. Hence we could satisfy in part the public restlessness by letting it move about in cars and look at and listen to entertainment designed to prove that love conquers all. A group of smart 17-year-olds could have accomplished that much. What were the physical adults really interested in? The answer is speculation. In land, commodities, stocks and bonds. We gambled like children who have just been taught to play poker with matchsticks; only we were inordinately impressed with ourselves because we were using money—real honest-to-God money. In the meantime, we did next to nothing for the health, hygiene, or morals of the people at large, and we pursued a foreign policy whose inconsistency was apparent to anyone who took time off even to glance at it.

"THE proof of the pudding is still in the eating and the after-effects," he continued, "not in how pretty the pudding's appearance was. Look what followed. The greatest depression in history, which we tried to blame on the gold standard, world trade, God knows what—everything but the true cause, our own incompetence. From there we drifted, yes, drifted into the greatest war of our history and all history. And mark you this. It was the first war we ever fought in which

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no *affirmative* material purpose was involved. No making the world safe for democracy this time, no liberation of oppressed colonials, no fight over the issue of human slavery. All we wanted to prove was that other nations had better let us alone. Did it ever occur to you that not one stirring war song was produced?"

"What about the United Nations Organization and the Atlantic Charter?" asked George.

"What is the basis of support for both of them? Simply and solely that they may prevent or postpone another war in which we would have to defend again our right to go to the devil in our own way. If you don't believe it, test the average citizen out on world government, explaining that it means that a New Yorker must be as responsible for what goes on in India as he now is for what goes on in, let us say, Arizona, which, God knows, is little enough. Just watch him back away. No, sir, we can't rise above petty personal ambitions and hatreds today. Be honest; by the time people have reached 50, they have fallen into two groups—the great group that hasn't made as much money as it hoped and is bitter about it, and the small group that has been financially successful and whose members can't understand why they are unhappy at home, or fight with their business partners, or have no conversation except damning all reformers. All that both groups really ask for is a modicum of good food, enough liquor and tobacco, a sports interest, and a reasonable amount of fornication. When they go beyond that into issues which they fatuously deem world-shaking, it's such things as Capitalism versus Communism, or Whether Our Government Should Go Into Business, or the Horrors of Money Not Backed by Specie. No wonder they're unhappy. No wonder they can't create the one thing that might make them happy—a national ideal for which they could work unselfishly."

"Look," interposed George, suddenly, "you've talked a lot about this 'national goal or ideal,' but I still don't get it clear. Just what do you mean by it?"

LET me read you a letter. It's from my nephew. He was one of the small second group I mentioned, one of those who had made plenty of money at 45 and found himself at loose ends. So he joined the Army in hope of escaping his sense of futility and has ended up as a liaison officer in A.M.G. in occupied Germany. He writes to me, not because I'm his uncle; such relationships fade out at our age, but because he has no friends who would be interested in the sort of ideas that come to him. Perhaps you'd better read it yourself. I happen to have it with me."

He extracted a neat typewritten document from his pocket and handed it to George. "I call it 'The Martian Observers'."

My dear Uncle:

For the past month I've been thinking more than usual about the people back home, what they are doing, but, more important, what they want to do and what group might lead them. So many vague, apparently inconsistent thoughts come to mind that I decided to put something on paper in the hope that doing so would clarify my thinking. What follows is the result. I shall be interested to see if it arouses only your customary scorn or, I hope, a gleam of sympathy.

It is an obvious but oft-forgotten fact that the prosperity and success of any country, city, or region is the result of the quality of the *people* who live there. We have often heard it said that the United States is prosperous because of its natural resources—mineral deposits, fertile land, equable climate. But other countries have had, and have today, equally great natural resources, and they do not produce or distribute goods and services on a scale remotely approaching the United States. The difference is in the people. The American people for 200 years have exhibited a curious "drive" which has led them to exploit their resources on a scale never before witnessed.

This "drive" has shown itself with varying degrees of intensity in different sections at different times. About 150 years ago New England was outstanding; later, the Middlewest. Today a great many people, including myself, think it is most marked in the Gulf - Southwest. Even the jokes about the people there bear this out. You have doubtless heard the story that Marshal Stalin once asked President Roosevelt if he felt sure that Texas would go along with a certain policy. People no longer tell stories like that about the Florida crackers or the Maine backwoodsmen.

Just where this "drive" will carry the Gulf-Southwest no one, not even themselves, can say. But it can confidently be said that sooner or later it will carry them into a head-on collision with the major political and economic issue in the world today. It is that issue which I should like to discuss.

It is not an easy issue to describe. Some people call it Capitalism vs. Communism; others Free Enterprise vs. State Control; others, Personal Liberty vs. State Authority. None of these, I think, really makes the issue clear. In order to try to clarify it, I think you have to go back a long way, perhaps 30,000 or 300,000 years, to a time when the dinosaurs and other prehistoric monsters roamed the earth.

Assume that at that time two observers from another world, perhaps the planet Mars, were laying bets as to which species of animal life had the best chance of survival on the earth. It is doubtful if either would ever have taken very long odds that man would survive. He

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had no defensive armor; a dozen other species could destroy him with ease in single combat. He had to have daily food and seemed to have surprisingly little physical equipment to get it. The reproduction of the species was a slow, dangerous process, done, usually, one birth at a time. The whole race, male and female, was subject to ailments that could carry them off if they lacked proper clothing and shelter.

Man had exactly two advantages, neither of which would have impressed the Martians very much. On the physical side, he had a thumb. On the mental side, he had far and away the best brain, but the Martians couldn't have detected that. The brain enabled him to invent weapons to defend himself and mechanical aids to supplement his individual strength; because of his thumb he could handle these inventions in a way no other animal could. (If you doubt this, try to operate for an hour without using your thumb and see how helpless you are.)

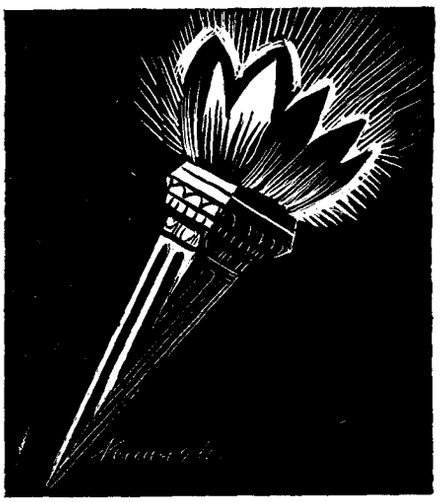
Then man made one more jump. He discovered that by cooperating with other men in the use of the brain and its inventions, he could overcome the beasts of prey, make the land yield food in season, devise and construct adequate shelter and clothing. So that if the two Martians had come back at a point 3,000 years ago they would have found, to their astonishment, that man not only had survived but was dominating the animal kingdom. The dinosaurs were extinct, they couldn't survive climatic changes; man could. So could dogs, horses, and elephants. But they were now working for that apparently helpless individual called man.

However, it would also have been clear that the mass of people still lived a precarious existence. They were continually threatened by three major natural calamities—famine, flood, and pestilence—and in pestilence I include those ailments which come from insufficient shelter and clothing. All over the world about 95 per cent of the people lived in constant fear of starvation, flood, and exposure. About five per cent had some security; what they had was achieved by their ability to take a tiny portion of the fruits of many people's labor. And so the belief grew up that the only security possible had to be based on the labor of a large inferior or slave class, who got very little of the results of their work.

Three thousand years ago that belief was probably correct. Even working in cooperation, men couldn't produce enough to give *everyone* a decent standard of living and protection from the ravages of nature. Our hypothetical Martians might well have laid bets at that point on whether man ever could do that.

But if the Martians had made their next trip in this year of our Lord 1946, they would have found a number of astonishing things. Assume that they looked over Europe and England and then our own country and then sat down to talk to you or me. The expression of their opinion would probably run something like this:

"We congratulate you Americans.



Apparently you have won the fight against famine, flood, and pestilence. During the past four years you have had 12 million of your most efficient workers away from their jobs. Nearly half the remaining workers were turning out ships, planes, and bullets which have no civilian use. Yet you fed everyone reasonably well. You found some kind of adequate shelter and clothing. You found wonderful new drugs to cure and prevent illness. Before the war you showed in your TVA that you could even control river floods, and during the war you did control them and used the water power to help you discover the secret of atomic energy, which will increase your powers a millionfold.

"Therefore," they would continue, "how simple it will be for you when those 12 million men come home and when the workers at home no longer have to use half their time making bombs and bullets. You can then easily see to it that *everyone* in the United States has decent food, clothing, housing, and medical care and at the same time do away with the last great threat of nature, the river flood. What a wonderful national objective lies before you! What pride every American will feel in working toward its speedy accomplishment! How quickly do you think you'll bring this condition about?"

In answer to that question, you or I, being truthful, honest men, would have to make a reply which would probably astonish our Martian friends more than any of their other discoveries did. We would have to say that we weren't at all sure this happy condition would *ever* be brought about.

"But why not?" the astonished Martians would ask. "The farms, the factories, the transportation systems are all there. The people competent to operate them are there. The physical energy is there. You can realize one of the great dreams of the human race. What can possibly stop you?"

"Well," we would have to answer, lamely, "we can't quite figure out how to keep those farms and factories going full blast the way they did in wartime. We're not sure we can get all the produce, whether food or cotton, off the farms into the hands of the people who need and want better food and clothing. In the early thirties we had a lot of people who wanted to work and earn food and clothing, and we had a big surplus of food and cotton and wool, but we had an awful job getting work for the unemployed. A lot of the food rotted, and the cotton and wool were wasted. The same condition may come again. And, by the way, friend Martians, don't count too much on our controlling all our river floods. There are a lot of people who think TVA was a big mistake, and there's a lot of opposition to any extension of that idea."

I am sure the Martians' bewilderment would grow apace.

"Do you mean to say," they would ask, "that the men who are capable of constructing this amazing economic machine can't learn how to make it run at full efficiency? Well, if that's true, it explains something we didn't understand about the so-called Old World."

Now it would be our turn to ask questions. We would want to know what they didn't understand. They would tell us.

"Over there the great majority of people seem to think the state ought to own either *all* the farms and factories and railroads or at least a large percentage of them. We couldn't understand why people attached such importance to this. We thought perhaps their economic machine wasn't effective enough to give everyone a decent living, and the state was supposed to improve it. But over here there is no such question. You can produce all that's needed. But apparently you don't know how to do it except in wartime. And apparently the Europeans don't know how to do it either. Well, we don't believe that the mass of people, here or there, now that they've seen with their own eyes a demonstration of how much man *can* produce, will ever be satisfied with any system which doesn't do the job. That desire is too deeply rooted in the human race; it springs from tens of thousands of years of fear of famine, flood, and pestilence. Now that the masses know that fear can be removed, they are going to insist on its removal."

Now that, my dear uncle, is a fair statement of the major political and economic problem in the world today. Ninety-five per cent of the people demand a system of government and economics which will keep the agricultural and industrial machine operating full time and at full efficiency. That demand is the expression of a desire built up by thousands of years of inherited fear. I don't believe it is going to be stopped by any intellectual arguments against it, no matter how adroit.

Yet, like every issue, there are two sides. As soon as men obtain even an approximation of security, they want something else. They want what we call "individual freedom," or, to put it in the vernacular, the right to do what they want so far as is consistent with the public safety. The desire for this freedom seems to stand in inverse proportion to the degree of security. In times of great danger, when the invading army is at the border or the river flood is rising, people will accept almost any restriction on their

(*Continued on page 29*)

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Altgeld of America

THE AMERICAN. By Howard Fast. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. 1946. 337 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

ONE night in New York John Peter Altgeld of Illinois stood up in Cooper Union before a crowd assembled to hear him advocate the Presidential candidacy of William Jennings Bryan. He was greeted by one of the most amazing audience responses in the history of that famous hall. The hundreds of people gathered there chanted in unison, "We love you for the enemies you have made; we love you for the enemies you have made." Bryan lost the election and Altgeld eventually died, broken politically and financially. But as the "Eagle Forgotten" of Vachel Lindsay's poem, Altgeld remains one of the nation's immortal liberals. His historical stature has increased by cubits; that of his detractors has become lost in the contempt of later and better informed generations.

As a subject for an author who has given us imaginative but revealing studies of great American liberals, the former Governor of Illinois is a fitting choice. Howard Fast loves the man of history who really felt the democratic urge. He loves, too, the moment of history when only the brave would stand up for it. Tom Paine, Gideon Jackson, Patrick Henry, now Peter Altgeld, are men of different times and places, but all had in common intense conviction and determination. Of such men Howard Fast writes with sympathy and vividness. If sometimes his liberal heroes and their friends seem too untarnished and their reactionary opponents too unmitigatedly evil, the resulting blacks and whites can be charged off to the sincerity of an author who feels passionately the historical rightness of the causes for which his subjects stood.

In "The American," the fictionized biography of Altgeld, Mr. Fast builds his story around the critical incidents in the political life of his hero. The dramatic moments for which Altgeld will always be remembered are, of course, the pardoning of the convicted Haymarket anarchists, the challenge to President Cleveland in the Pullman strike, and his capture of the Democratic Party from Cleveland. This is, therefore, no definitive biography. We are given glimpses of the young Altgeld, of the conflict between father and son, of the soldier in the Civil War, of the struggle against poverty, and of eventual education and success in politics. The familiar American story of the son of an immigrant who pulled himself up by his own bootstraps is indicated without being stressed. So too are the happy marriage and the comfortable life achieved before a slowly awakened conscience put all in jeopardy.

But the major interest which the book arouses stems from its account of Altgeld's painfully realized decision to challenge the oligarchy of politicians and businessmen who in the post Civil War period had captured America. It took tremendous courage to pardon the surviving Hay-

market prisoners. Altgeld himself, a practical politician, with beliefs contrary to those of the convicted, knew that he would be smeared throughout the country by a press owned and controlled by an unholy alliance of politics and big business. That decision turned the whole course of Altgeld's life. Howard Fast presents it with restraint but with an extremely dramatic effectiveness. Earlier in his life Altgeld, then a respected and influential judge, had refused to intercede for the alleged bomb-throwers. Now when he had achieved the realization of his ambitions, the governorship of his state, he was forced by remorseless logic to the one stand which could undo all he had succeeded in accomplishing in the way of effecting his own personal advancement.

Similarly his battle with Cleveland for the control of the Democratic Party is described with intense drama and little rhetorical righteousness. Altgeld distrusted the young Bryan. The latter's frustration of Altgeld's plan through his epochal "cross of gold" speech is as exciting as the national political convention described. After the defeat of Bryan, Altgeld's career is something of an anti-climax. His failure to win the mayoralty of Chicago was the measure of the price he had paid for his convictions; the respect he won from working people and from everyone interested in democratic social reforms was the great consolation. The death of Altgeld following his collapse after a speech opposing the Boer War was a fitting end to a great liberal career.

Fast has caught the great episodes, made them moving and grand. He obviously sees Altgeld in the Lincoln tradition to which he belonged—a lesser demigod, to be sure, but one of sufficient stature to merit the comparison. Around Altgeld are his friends and associates, each of whom plays a part in determining his actions. But here they appear in the shadows. Darrow, Debs, Whitlock are background. This is completely Altgeld's story, and he holds center stage from beginning to end. Other than Altgeld, the most truly realized character is a man whom Altgeld never met at first hand—Parsons the anarchist, who paid with his life for the Haymarket bomb which he could never have thrown.

Within the limiting framework of a fictionized biography of an important but not well enough known American political figure, Howard Fast has produced another extremely satisfactory study. Bringing to it his own liberal partisanship, he shows us not a knight in shining armor, but a less romantic figure who has left us a legend typically American and fine. His portrait of a man who could meet the politicians on their own ground, whether in a hotel room or around a beer keg, who was conditioned to play their game and yet could be awakened to the call of conscience and social responsibility, is as admirable for its vivid drama as it is for its choice of subject.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: NO. 161

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 161 *will be found in the next issue.*

AB CDBE FAB GHBIJKB

GKLIAMNMOJIPN QMQBDF

EABD FM KPL DMFAJDO.

MKIPH EJNRB—GJIFSHB MT

RMHJPD OHPL

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 160

Often the cockloft is empty in those whom nature hath built many stories high.

THOMAS FULLER

—*Andronicus.*

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The Wildes, Father and Son

OSCAR WILDE, HIS LIFE AND HIS WIT. By Hesketh Pearson. New York: Harper & Bros. 1946. 333 *pp.* $3.75.

VICTORIAN DOCTOR. By T. G. Wilson. New York: L. B. Fischer. 1946. 325 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by JEAN C. S. WILSON

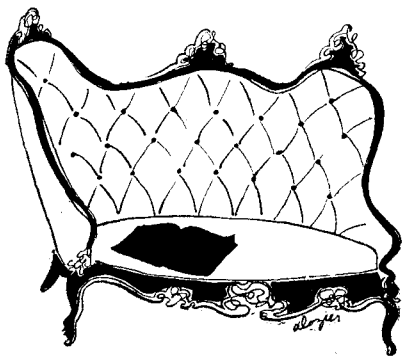
OF ALL the poets and writers that mocked the foibles and fashions of the nineteenth century, Oscar Wilde was the true child of Victorianism. His wit and humor could only have flourished in a *fin de siècle* period dominated by the Mayfair drawing-room. His trial and subsequent imprisonment could only have occurred in a time when psychology was in its infancy and false prudery in the ascendant. Because he was the leading figure in a society scandal he has been too often considered as *sui generis* instead of indigenous to his age.

The nineties were more than a picturesque prologue to the twentieth century; they were the epilogue to an age of unprecedented emphasis on manners and materialism. Rapid mid-century developments in commerce, manufacture, and science had won an empire for Britain abroad that eventually reached the staggering proportions of one-quarter of the earth's surface. At home, these same forces had created great new social classes which were often vulgar in their display of wealth, evangelical in their religion, and lacking in appreciation of the arts. Literary men of the day devoted their time to social satire and criticism in an attempt to awaken the rising classes to their own snobbery, cultural ignorance, and appalling commercialism. By 1890 the battle had been won and what was a serious and vital literary movement ended in the twilight of estheticism.

Perhaps the best background for the understanding of the social and domestic forces that produced Oscar Wilde is T. G. Wilson's study of Wilde's father "Victorian Doctor." As far as I know this is the only unbiased picture of Sir William Wilde and his wife, the Italian-Irish authoress Speranza, to see print. It is not only a fine character analysis which gives its principals the foreground, but it also paints a vivid backdrop of literary Dublin, Irish political dissension and strife, and medical and archeological developments of the period. From page to page, one is continually reminded that the nineteenth century was an age of constant flux and change.

Sir William Wilde was himself a member of the new middle class. His father was a country doctor who married into the ancient Irish family of Fynne in County Mayo. Dr. Wilson tells us that the Fynnes were mentally unstable and that undoubtedly much of the peculiarities and genius of the Wilde family can be traced to the Fynne strain. In Sir William the Fynne blood seemed to show in a remarkable intellect, a certain amount of literary ability, and his erratic personal life. His medical and scientific career was as astonishing as the diversity and variety of his interests. He was a famous otologist, who made many of his own instruments and founded his extraordinarily successful St. Mark's Ophthalmic Hospital for diseases of the eye and ear in Dublin, an archeologist and writer of note, a pioneer in the field of vital statistics, and a constant writer of scientific essays, one of which on the suckling of whales and other marine animals was of real biologic significance. By the time he was knighted in 1864, at the age of forty-nine, for his work on the census during the years of the Irish famine, he had completed Part I of the catalogue of the antiquities of the Royal Irish Academy, which is still a definitive work. Sir William's achievements are all the more astounding when one realizes that throughout this time he was a busy practising physician. In actual accomplishment he far surpassed his more notorious son.

But like his son Oscar his intellectual feats were marred by a particularly scandalous public trial. His personal life seems to have been filled with illegitimacies which caused little if any stir in Dublin social circles until the public circulation of a pamphlet "Florence Boyle Price: or a Warnings, *(sic)* by Speranza." This was not written by Sir William's wife, but by a mistress of some years' standing, Mary Josephine Travers, who accused Sir William in parable of first chloroforming and then seducing her. From the vindictive patterns of her behavior it is apparent that she was mentally and emotionally unsound. Though the jury found in favor of her case, they thought so little of her that she was only awarded a farthing's damages. The impact of the trial on Sir William was far more costly since it brought about his immediate decline as a public figure and a medical force. The similarity between Sir William's record and that of his son Oscar seems to show that they were both so constituted that they could only perform brilliantly in the full light of public praise and acclaim.



Speranza, though not so talented as her husband, moved in the political and literary circles of Dublin. For a time in the forties, she wrote revolutionary poetry and prose of an inferior quality for the Young Ireland movement, and later Irish folk stories. Her bizarre clothes, studied languor, odd personality, and glandular peculiarities prevent her from being taken as a serious revolutionary, and instead she appears as one of the tragi-comic figures which the Irish nationalist movement seemed to produce with such frequency.

Much of Dr. Wilson's material on the Wilde family is used by Hesketh Pearson in "Oscar Wilde, His Life and His Wit" to show the brilliance and eccentricity of Oscar's intellectual and emotional heritage. When Oscar's life, unnatural though it was, is viewed in the focus of his family background and his chosen environment of fashion and frippery, it seems a normal growth; in almost every case he followed the parental pattern. He inherited from both parents literary facility and independence of thought and behavior, from his father quick activity of mind and sexual maladjustment, and from his mother a taste for elaborate costume and a physical make-up which Dr. Wilson suggests was due to glandular malfunction. The mixture of these qualities produced Oscar's spectacular personality and genius.

Mr. Pearson's biography is first of all a balanced and sane account of the events of Wilde's life, and secondly, and even more difficult to achieve, a portrait of his wit. Wilde said of himself, "I have put all of my genius into my life: I have only put my talent into my works." In this sentence Oscar gives us the clue to his life and activities. There is magnificent foolery bordering on genius in the way he turned himself into a caricature of the literary and artistic criticism of the age by adopting a languid air, and wearing velvet knickerbockers and the famous sunflower. His epigrams, paradoxes, fantasies, and telling phrases, as revived by Mr. Pearson, show us a man of unbelievable conversational powers. As a medieval

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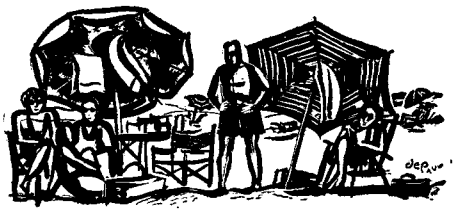
bard wandering from hamlet to hamlet telling tales for his dinner Oscar would have been supremely happy, for he could have avoided the labor of composition and devoted all his energies to his great gift of vocal story-telling. For a period he was the modern equivalent of the ancient scop. He did not, of course, sing for his supper but he did build his literary and social position on his dinner-table conversation and until his trial he was spoiled, petted, and pampered by the English upper classes, for his entertainment value was immense.

His popularity, his tremendous sense of fun and nonsense unquestionably set him apart from a workaday world and perhaps obscured the bent of his personal relations from even his own eyes. After his imprisonment he says, "What the paradox was to me in the sphere of thought, perversity became to me in the sphere of passion." The explanation seems far more complex. All of his life, Wilde was haunted by a sense of impending doom, and this might well have been caused by the effect on a young mind of his father's trial and disappearance from public life. Certainly Wilde's career of early fame and brilliance, trial, and ruin closely parallels his father's experience. There is even coincidence in the fact that Miss Travers and the Marquis of Queensbury were more than slightly deranged mentally. Wilde did cause his own downfall by first suing the Marquis of Queensbury for libel. If he had not done this it is doubtful whether any criminal action would have been brought against him.

Expiation, immature emotional development, a possible lack of marital adjustment, buttressed by Victorianism in its worst form, seem to be the contributing factors that led to Reading Gaol and exile. In evaluating Wilde's friendships and his friendship with Lord Alfred Douglas in particular, most biographers seem to have overlooked his marriage as a possible cause of his perversion. Mr. Pearson tells us something of Wilde's courtship and his role as a devoted husband during the early years of his marriage but it is not sufficient. We know that until his death Wilde remained an interested and loving father, though he was never allowed to see his sons after his trial, but we know almost nothing about his wife, Constance Wilde, except that she was beautiful, deeply religious, and almost fanatically interested in missionaries. There seems to be no contemporary account of the life in the house on Tite Street in its last years, but Wilde must have suffered disillusion, for we find him saying, "The worst of having a romance is



that it leaves one so unromantic," or, "One should always be in love. That is the reason one should never marry."

In the eighties Wilde was satirizing Victorianism by his wit and life and it is his tragedy that in the nineties he became the victim of the age that made him famous. His habits were pathological, but in a medically enlightened time he would never have been made a whipping-boy for public morality. Through anecdote, quotation, and reminiscence, a lucid account of the trials and Wilde's real suffering under the prison system of the day, Mr. Pearson gives a full-dress biographical performance. Considering the purpose of his book he quite rightfully regards Wilde's poetry, prose, and plays as source material for Wilde's character and life rather than as literature. Compared to his gift of tongues Wilde's writing was second-rate. His very facility of speech may have prevented him from being more than an author of promise and it also may have had much to do with his inability to grasp the realities of his own life. Wilde said: "Between me and life there is a mist of words always. I throw probability out of the window for the sake of a phrase, and the chance of an epigram makes me desert truth." This is as good an explanation of his talent and tragedy as we are likely to find.

Candide Up to Date

ALL FOR THE BEST. By Bentz Plagemann. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1946. 226 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THE title, plus the bust of Voltaire on the dust cover, plus any page of this book, will establish its relationship with "Candide." It is, at best, a second cousin, but the strain is very consciously there and not without some of its old vigor. For Candide we have young David Forster, a Navy doctor, and for Pangloss his Uncle Harry. Between them, with alternating shafts of naïveté and cynicism, they strike some telling blows at contemporary America, its customs, its romanticism, its lip-service to liberalism, and its rigid caste systems and prejudices; and, in a sharper focus, there are scathing judgments on medicine, psychology, and psychiatry as they are professed today. It is David who makes the broad and exultant swipes at truth, who is apt to cry out in delight at the wonderful fact of progress—"If a man was shot by an arrow during combat in the Middle Ages he could only be carried into the nearest castle, but nowadays when a man is blown apart by a hand grenade he is taken five hundred miles by plane to a hospital—" or to remark quite gravely, "I flatter myself that I am broadminded. I do not go out of my way to make friends with Jews, but I do not avoid them. . . . They weren't in my fraternity at Martin Towers. It seemed the only sensible way to avoid discrimination."

But it is his Uncle Harry who shoots more consciously at acid evaluation. He advises David on a career: "We are learning now that if one begins with the study of psychology the path leads inevitably to mysticism and beyond, all culminating, ultimately, in free verse. The poet's tower, David, is not only a lonely place, but nowadays it is so cluttered with technical works that one rarely has time for the traditional meditation. . . ." And so on. Some of this, of course, is patently smart, and unfairly loaded, but it makes good fun. There are always some hits in a load of buckshot.

It is a curious thing that David, who is supposedly the honest and impeccable Candide of the modern scene, is not at all the most attractive figure in the book. That title must go to his Uncle Harry, who combines with the practical cynicism of Pangloss the worldly charm and eloquence of Oscar Wilde's Lord Harry Wotton. We will recall that Voltaire took care not to permit this to happen; that wily old moralist made it quite clear where our sympathies were to lie. But Mr. Plagemann, like Wilde, has been taken into camp by his own created antagonist; it is Uncle Harry who seems not only the brighter but the better man. He bears the weight of worldly knowledge with gay martyrdom. He advises young David with patience and pity, almost with reticence, and his remarks upon folly are the more pungent for his acceptance of it, than are David's horrified discoveries that to err is human, and to compromise necessary. Mr. Plagemann seems less than fervent about his moralities, for he has given his best lines to the devil's advocate.

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Dissection of a Woman

WE HAPPY FEW. By Helen Howe. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1946. 345 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

HARVARD University has always been fair game for the novelist who was endowed with wit, and a certain malicious affection for the Boston Brahmins who had developed in Cambridge a tough integument against the grosser aspects of this world. George Weller's memorable and out-of-print "Not to East, Not for Love" attacked Harvard at its source, as John Marquand's "The Late George Apley" and "H. M. Pulham, Esq." undermined it at its perimeter. As far as my knowledge extends, all of these pot shots at the case-hardened intellectuals and social die-hards who have nursed at Harvard's refined breast have been aimed at males. Helen Howe's second novel, "We Happy Few," is their female counterpart.

It is a safe guess that the week following its publication has been pretty hard on the upper ranks of Cambridge society. It is the kind of novel in which the characters seem to have been drawn from life, and it must be painful in these days to imagine that one of the circle of intellectual snobs at whom Miss Howe points scornfully may be your elegant, cultured best friend, or even yourself. The women and some of the men in the charmed circle that surrounds the Dorothea Calcott of this novel are excruciatingly broad-minded. Religion, patriotism, love, the study of beauty itself, which they presume occupies their hearts and sets them apart from the ordinary human being, are never accepted or spoken of seriously. But this glittering surface of cleverness tinged with malice, this superficial charm, hides the marks of deep-rooted envy and jealousy; as the surface glaze of their old furniture hides the ravages of the worm.

Dorothea comes from a prosperous family of broad-minded "pagans," living beautifully at an old school for the right kind of boys who would eventually carry on the Harvard tradition. She marries a wealthy young Bostonian from a long line of Harvard ancestors who is inevitably teaching and pursuing an abstruse if culturally satisfying thesis. Dorothea becomes the vivacious and palidly beautiful leader of a charmed circle consisting of as fine a set of highly educated snobs as our literature has seen for a long time. A chaste woman at first and a reasonably cold wife, she dominates everyone including her husband by her quick social awareness, her deep ambition to push her John into the irreproachably respectable position of headmaster of one of the colleges. One child is born, a son, who is sent in a mood of daring to Exeter, instead of to a church school, as if, says the author, "he was going to Tuskegee." The diversions of this little ruling gang included public admiration of each other, private scorn of others' opinions and gifts, and heated discussions over Henry James, T. S. Eliot, and Herman Melville, who had them all in thrall. In fact, if the war had not come along every one of the men would have turned out a book on the author of "Moby Dick."

The war naturally blew esoteric Harvard to bits and its concussion sent Dorothea's husband into the British Navy and that chaste and politely sneering lady panting into the arms of a complete vulgarian, a New York outsider who had a gift with women and with the New York stock market, for he was, of all things for a Calcott to go to bed with, a stock broker. Dorothea discovers physical love and jealousy; and when John is pronounced dead, she is an exhausted and fragmented woman.

The rest of the novel is devoted to Miss Howe's attempt to show that there is a real woman's heart beating in her heroine's breast. Johnny, her son, enlists in the Navy at seventeen, and his mother goes to Montana to be near him. She endures what are for her the hideous discomforts and crudities of wartime travel. Among the plain and pleasant people near the camp she finds herself acting the role of a lady bountiful and is humiliated when it is discovered that she has a rich and splendid background of foreign travel which she has never revealed. Her cure, according to Miss Howe, is finally accomplished when in the last chapter a neglected baby she holds in her arms is sick down her aristocratic back. "Looking back across the continent she felt no trace of wistfulness. Mrs. John Calcott of Brattle Street, Cambridge, was dead and buried.

—*Halsman*

Helen Howe has made "a permanent addition to the novels that skilfully and with some cruelty dissect a woman's nature."

It may be that the author has constructed only too memorable and polished a figure of the younger Dorothea, the exquisite dodger of all the common vices, except envy, so that in the reader's mind there is a tinge of suspicion that this new and more human creature would melt like a snow woman when she returns to Cambridge. There is little question that the gay, if shallow, Dorothea is more charming than the woman who has learned the secret of her own nature. But whether she should have been reformed or not, "We Happy Few" will remain a permanent addition to the list of novels that skilfully and with some cruelty dissect a woman's nature. It is the second step of a career as promising as any other woman writer's in this country.

Hesiod and Homer

By Louis Kent

BRONZE man, iron man, less than god,
Shouldering axe, breaking sod,
These men labored for Hesiod.

Spray stung, sea bitten, brine wrung roamer,
Circe's loss and the Sirens', Homer
Gave Odysseus to trough and comber.

Lacking hero to act like god,
He robed the bronze man, armed with clod.
Hand for a spade, heart for a sod,
Still they labored for Hesiod.

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One Little Island and How It Grew

IMPERIAL COMMONWEALTH. By Lord Elton. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946, *x* + 544 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

THIS narrative of the expansion of England, from John Cabot to VE Day, is offered to the American public as an account of the rise, present structure, and future aims of "that most fruitful of recorded experiments in international organization, the British Empire." Although many of us know rather more about the British, at home and overseas, than we did five years ago, most of us still entertain a good many obsolete notions and foolish prejudices about their policies. We need to get rid of such obstacles to understanding, lest we be misled again by hatemongers and pressure groups out of the way of international coöperation, the only way to peace. No people on earth has a bigger stake in peace than the people of Britain, or a better will towards it. No other people has anything like so many urgent, complex, painful, and exasperating problems to solve, or is moving toward the necessary solutions in, on the whole, so enlightened and civilized a spirit. Any book, therefore, which can help us to a more sympathetic understanding of the background and motive forces of that complex aggregate of self-governing, independent democracies, semi-autonomous colonies, protectorates, and experiments in trusteeship which we call the British Empire should be especially welcome.

Towards the understanding of so complicated a phenomenon there will be many approaches, some more and some less likely to appeal to American readers. The approach adopted in this book is to make no compromise at all with any of the critics of British policy. Godfrey Elton writes in the tradition of Froude and Seely, and a little in that of Rudyard Kipling and Noel Coward. He can find something to say in defense of even the Opium War, even of General Dyer, of Amritsar infamy. As he tells England's story, from the time that "individual English courage and enterprise" challenged the might of Spain upon the sea in "a great uprush of moral energy," empire was not so much sought by the English as thrust upon them because they peculiarly deserved it. Just as at the outset England was saved from the Spanish Armada "by the native qualities of the islanders . . . despite their government," so in each succeeding crisis the English, though always unprepared and heavily outnumbered, always triumphed nevertheless, "for success in war depends upon the social pattern of a country and upon its morale," and in these respects the English were clearly superior, alike to the gloomy despotisms and corrupt aristocracies to which they were customarily opposed, and to the selfish, mercenary burghers and revolutionary mobs which they occasionally had to encounter.

This was, of course, a good thing. For the Spaniards "had no tradition of individual enterprise" (shades of Cortez and Cabeza de Baca!) and "the virtues of Spain were not the imperial virtues"; the Dutch were "never great colonists," and the French were "not really an imperial people." This last is so clear that Lord Elton is genuinely puzzled by the fact that the French were served in India by administrators of genius. It was, he says, a paradox. Obviously the Germans, who, under the leadership of Bismarck, are described as beginning the colonial scramble after 1870(!), deserved empire even less. At this time, however, England reëntered the race for colonies only reluctantly, compelled by "humanitarian motives" and "a desire to protect the native races against exploitation," and although virtue was rewarded by territory four times as large and many as rich as the Germans were able to grab, this is described as "less than the lion's share."

Lord Elton scorns to account for British imperialism by "glib economic theories and reasons of state." You will search his text in vain for any discussion of the importance of coal, or rubber, or oil, for any light on the connection between the legislation for India and the Lancashire cotton industry, or any hint of the terms on which the Portuguese or the Dutch held their enfeoffed empires, or any suggestion that British statesmen tended to eschew annexation between 1815 and 1875 (they copped little more than Singapore, New Zealand, a third of India and some African stations in that period) because free trade, industrial development, and the British Navy made the whole world virtually their colonial domain. The wisdom of statesmen, particularly Charles II, Castlereagh, and Joseph Chamberlain, gets a little more credit than geographic advantages and economic forces, but the general inferiority of foreigners, and the "hereditary genius of the English people," really provide an adequate explanation for England's expanding greatness.

In spite of surface similarities, it would be unfair to liken this method of historical explanation to the dark mysticism of blood and soil which Englishmen, lately, did so much to overthrow. And it would be equally

—From "War Pictures by British Artists."

Barmaid at the Red Lion. A painting by Edward Ardizzone.

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unfair to assume that because Tory jingoism is undiscriminating, the British have no just reason to be proud of their imperial record. If he can keep his temper and his sense of humor, the average American reader can be reminded in these pages of episodes of heroism and of unselfish humanitarian service which will make him proud to belong to a race capable of achieving them. I mean, of course, the human race. And most Americans will find facts new to them about a fascinating and important series of experiments in colonial self-government and free international association. But the trouble with this kind of historical writing, as reading for us lesser breeds without the law, is that the spectacle of God's Englishman bowing in astonished awe before the image of his own transcendent moral superiority is likely to move us to responses unhelpful to international good feeling. So if you have any latent Anglophobic tendencies, choose some account of the British Empire which will strain your patience less. Perhaps the end of a victorious war is not the most propitious time for unbiased judgments of national character. And perhaps strenuous participation in governmental propaganda programs is not the best conditioning for historical objectivity.

—*Hal Reiff*

Harrison Salisbury "does not believe that Russia and the United States will go to war."

Russia Without Gloom

RUSSIA ON THE WAY. By Harrison Salisbury. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1946. 414 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MAURICE HINDUS

HARRISON SALISBURY, foreign editor of the United Press, went to Russia for six weeks and stayed eight months. He arrived there "at a good moment," after the Teheran Conference, when victory over Germany was no longer in doubt, when to the Russians it was only a matter of more "bloody battles ahead."

His book is a report of his observations and experiences, interpolated with lucid, unpretentious, thought-provoking interpretations. It would have gained in readability had the author resisted the ordinary correspondent's temptation to dwell at some length on his personal adventures of living and working in wartime Russia. But once he plunges into the real story of his stay in Russia, he confines himself to experiences that carry some special meaning or reveal a special insight into Russian character. In his comments and observations Salisbury is as deft as he is reasonable, as humane as he is earthy. He is neither pro-Russian nor anti-Russian. He is an eager, intelligent, Middlewesterner who depicts and appraises Russia not in terms of doctrine and ideology but with his own robust and vivid sense of reality. Hailing from Minneapolis with a degree from the University of Minnesota, he makes some shrewd and significant comparisons between Russia and America, particularly the Middle and Northwest. The city of Astrakhan makes him think of the Dakotas in the sixties. But the Dakotas of those days were young and the Astrakhan of today is one thousand years old. Astrakhan is symbolic of the age of wood in Russia's civilization—an age that sooner or later must go. "Russia can and should be rebuilt from one end to the other."

Leningrad makes him think of Paris, the Crimea is "a strip of the Riviera," the Ukraine is Iowa and Nebraska, Central Asia is Russia's South California. The railroad station of Samarkand is like the depot in Quincy, Illinois, or in Muscatine, Iowa. In the course of a two-day journey from Moscow to Leningrad he looked out on scenes that could be matched "from the window of a Soo train in Northern Wisconsin." The steamboat plying the waters of the mighty Siberian river Ob brought to his mind the upper Mississippi in the 1870's. Constantly the author is reminded of American pioneering in an earlier era of our history and seeks to impress the reader with the fact that whatever else Russia may or may not be, it is essentially a land of vast vigorous and far-reaching pioneering. Siberian boosters are no different from "a bunch of Western civic boosters."

There is no gloom in Salisbury's book. Russian bureaucrats are as stubborn as they are obtuse; Russian propaganda is clumsy and dull. But the Russians are a lively, energetic, and fun-loving people. They love to sing and dance and recite poetry, and have an extraordinary gift of entertaining themselves in groups and in crowds. They age more rapidly than Americans and cannot understand American levity about things that should evoke reverence and solemnity. The chapter on "A Very Formal People" is one of the best and most delightful in the book.

In the chapter on Stalin there is much information that has never before appeared in the English language. It is a well-balanced portrait of the generalissimo with the accent on the purely human side of his life. Salisbury finds no evidence for the charge so often made in the foreign press and by foreign observers that new classes are emerging in Russia. He draws a distinction between class and rank. Russia is one of the most uniformed countries in the world and the uniform is a symbol of the emphasis of rank, which is neither hereditary nor necessarily permanent.

The author is convinced that Russian thinking is now guided "by a philosophy of conservatism." By this he means that inside the country the revolution has spent itself and that henceforth the chief energies of leaders and people will be devoted to conserving what has already been achieved in the way of reform and innovation.

The chapters describing the trip with Eric Johnston to Siberia and Central Asia make particularly lively and challenging reading. Previous to this journey the author had been to India and in Persia, and he makes constant comparisons between these countries and their neighboring Soviet Republics. The Tadjiks, Kazakhs, Uzbecks look very much like the people across the border in India, but while the latter live in an age-old primitiveness, the former are mastering the machine age and are pushing with energy and no little fervor into the modern world.

The comparisons between Alma Ata, capital of the Soviet Kazakh Republic, and Teheran, capital of Persia, are as entertaining as they are illuminating. The two cities are alike in that both are situated on high plateaus against a background of snow-clad mountains. But Teheran is old not only in age but with senility, while Alma Ata is young not only in years but in ambition. Teheran has a handsome race course but no horses,

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an up-to-date opera house but no singer, an excellent water supply but neither pipes nor sewers, beautiful palaces but no plumbing, superb college buildings but no faculty. Alma Ata has an opera house and opera singers, a ballet, a dramatic theatre, motion picture studios, fourteen colleges and 13,000 students, a symphony orchestra, and hardly any illiteracy.

Salisbury is not inclined to take a pessimistic view of Russian-American relations. Quarrels will continue, but "I would say that these would be surface quarrels." He does not believe that Russia and the United States will go to war. He cannot conceive of either country launching an attack on the other.

To readers who would enjoy a lively, good-humored account of Russia packed with entertaining incident and shrewd observation of a kind that only a Middlewesterner would make, Mr. Salisbury's book can be highly recommended.

Crusoe with Something Added

70,000 TO 1. By Quentin Reynolds. New York: Random House. 1946. 217 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN BARKHAM

QUENTIN REYNOLDS has written eight books in six years. The eighth, "70,000 to 1," must have glided off his typewriter with the ease of his own urbane drawl. It reads as though it wrote itself.

Publishers are reportedly shying away from war books. This is only incidentally one. Primarily it is a story of the wreck and rescue of an Air Force Robinson Crusoe called Gordon Manuel. The master sergeant (later lieutenant) bailed out when his plane crashed over the Jap base of New Britain in the early days of the Pacific war.

City slickers might have quailed at the prospect of landing in the ocean with a broken leg five miles from the shore, but not Sergeant Manuel. For a Maine backwoodsman like him the jungle-studded island, to say nothing of the 70,000 Japs it harbored, held no terrors whatever. In no time at all he was living comfortably off snails and coconuts, snugly holed up in the safety of the bush. Doused every day in salt water, his wounds stayed clean and slowly healed.

Later, when he wanted a change of diet, he tried snakemeat. This he did by neatly lassooing a python sunbasking on a rock. Reports the sergeant blandly:

> Skinning him without a knife was a bit of a problem. My gunsight was fairly sharp and I used it as though it were a knife. The skin peeled off all right, and under the skin the flesh was almost white. It looked like halibut meat. I ate it and liked it. It was almost as tender as chicken.

In due course a man Friday turned up, too—in this case a shaggy, warm-hearted native with a blue V tattooed on his chin. He could catch a fish with his bare hands and shin up a

tree for coconuts in two shakes of a ducks tail. For his "masta" he did both, and many other things besides. Most important of all, he kept him out of the way of prying Jap patrols. The natives could smell Japs coming.

When Manuel was well enough to travel, his man led him through the jungle to other wandering fliers. British, Australians, Americans—they constantly criss-crossed the island seeking escape. In time they got used to the jungle at night.

> The jungle is always growing; that is why it is never still. There are thousands of trees and vines and flowers, and you can literally hear them growing.

Before long Manuel's one-man party had grown to half a dozen Crusoes with a fortnight of Fridays to tend and guide them. Their trek ended in a cove called Open Bay, where a U. S. submarine boldly picked them up one day and turned about for New Guinea.

Manuel was none the worse for his nine months in the bush, and he certainly had a swell story to tell. Fortunately for him, Quentin Reynolds has done the telling. This time he has severely repressed the temptation to sentimental embellishment. Here it is, in lean, lithe prose, presumably just as Sergeant Manuel told it to General Kenney when he got back. It makes rousing reading, especially for those whose pulses can still be made to race.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

OCCUPATIONS OF SHAKESPEAREAN CHARACTERS.

Listed below in the column on the left are 25 characters from Shakespeare's plays. Can you match up each character with his occupation and the play in which he appears? Allowing 2 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 26.

1. Autolycus	( ) Bellows-mender	( ) As You Like It
2. Bolingbroke	( ) Butler	( ) As You Like It
3. Bottom	( ) Carpenter	( ) Henry IV 2
4. Caliban	( ) Clown	( ) Henry IV 2
5. Cassandra	( ) Conjuror	( ) Henry IV 2
6. Christopher Sly	( ) Constable	( ) Henry VI 2
7. Cinna	( ) Country Justice	( ) Julius Caesar
8. Dogberry	( ) Courtesan	( ) Love's Labour's Lost
9. Doll Tearsheet	( ) Jester	( ) Macbeth
10. Feeble	( ) Joiner	( ) The Merchant of Venice
11. Flute	( ) Money-lender	( ) The Merchant of Venice
12. Hecate	( ) Poet	( ) Merry Wives of Windsor
13. Holofernes	( ) Prophetess	( ) Midsummer Night's Dream
14. Malvolio	( ) Rogue	( ) Midsummer Night's Dream
15. Nell Quickly	( ) Schoolmaster	( ) Midsummer Night's Dream
16. Nerissa	( ) Shepherdess	( ) Midsummer Night's Dream
17. Phebe	( ) Slave	( ) Midsummer Night's Dream
18. Quince	( ) Steward	( ) Much Ado About Nothing
19. Shallow	( ) Tailor	( ) Taming of the Shrew
20. Shylock	( ) Tavern-hostess	( ) The Tempest
21. Snug	( ) Tinker	( ) The Tempest
22. Starveling	( ) Waiting-maid	( ) The Tempest
23 Stephano	( ) Weaver	( ) Troilus and Cressida
24. Touchstone	( ) Witch	( ) Twelfth Night
25. Trinculo	( ) Woman's-tailor	( ) The Winter's Tale

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How Not to Do It

THE ATOMIC REVOLUTION. By Robert D. Potter. New York: McBride. 1946. 165 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS N. RIDENOUR

THIS book is apparently intended to be the poor man's Smyth Report, Acheson-Lilienthal Report, and "One World or None," all between a single pair of covers. For those who find the original documents too heavy, "The Atomic Revolution" can scarcely be recommended, for the author's understanding of the scientific and social matters involved is so superficial that he has not been able even to reproduce accurately the facts of the basic documents, let alone understand the implications of those facts.

The 160 large, breathless pages contain, on the basis of a hasty count, no fewer than thirty-three errors in fact and over twenty more or less serious blunders in interpretation. It is impossible to convey numerically the degree to which the author has done violence to the delicate problems of the interaction of physics with the modern world.

The book is separated into two parts. The first is intended as a general summary of the history and the significance of the liberation of atomic energy. The second part is meant to be a "technical" account of the background of modern physics essential to an understanding of atomic energy. The author writes down to his audience to such an extent that one wonders whether those for whom the book is meant have yet learned to read.

A few direct quotations may make it clear what is wrong. The penetration of the author's political thinking, as well as the nature of his style (which is a singularly pure example of what Fowler calls "twopence colored"), will be brought out by the following passage: "With the threat of global catastrophe ever at hand, if atomic energy is used for military purposes, the world will at last be forced to work for peace and the nations of the world will learn together, despite any likes or dislikes among them. Only when and if science perfects a foolproof, certain, and positive defense against the atomic bomb and its threat will wars again be waged among men."

On the scientific side, we learn that the atomic bomb employs a "moderator" to slow down the neutrons causing the reaction. This is shown in a figure on page 46, and described in the following terms: "All that is then necessary to make an atom bomb is to slow down the neutrons so that they will hit and split the atoms of uranium 235." As the Smyth report indicates, this could scarcely be more mistaken; the whole problem of making an efficient atomic bomb is to cause the reaction to go to completion in less than a millionth of a second. There is no time to spend waiting for slow neutrons. On page 125 we are told that uranium 238 is the parent of actinouranium, another of the many remarkable "facts" released for the first time in this book.

Popular writing on science has not yet attained a sound position. When it is done by a scientist, too often the paucity in scientific background of the general reader is ignored, and the result becomes too heavy to be digested. When it is done by a popularizer, like the author of this book, it is too often just plain wrong. Between these two options, there may seem to be little to choose; but it has always seemed to me more important to be right than to be entertaining. Certain men, such as George Gamow ("Atomic Energy in Cosmic and Human Life") have shown that it is possible to be both.

Mr. Potter succeeds in making science dull without the mitigating virtue of quoting its results correctly. His appreciation of the social problems which physics has raised for the coming century is adolescent. His discussion of the future of atomic energy is alike shallow and uninformed.

Those who are interested in the facts of atomic energy should read the Smyth Report or Gamow's "Atomic Energy"; those interested in the immediate implications of the facts should read "One World or None," and those interested in the tremendous problem of maintaining peace in an atomic world should read the Acheson-Lilienthal report. I can recommend "The Atomic Revolution" only to those who enjoy rhetoric of the following sort (page 43): "While all these wheels within wheels were revolving in Washington to plan, direct, and coordinate the atom-bomb project, the pawns in the game of scientific research 'war' were being shifted too."

Human Being as Poet

MAN AND SHADOW: An Allegory. By Alfred Kreymborg. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1946. 256 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WHEN people become too drastically critical of our American democracy (and it is sufficiently easy to compile a catalogue of its faults and even crimes), Alfred Kreymborg is an American of whom I like to think. He has been a pioneer poet and encourager of young poets for many years. In this present book, more an autobiography than an allegory, and clearest and best as the former, his account of his family and his bringing up in the United States is a characteristically American story. Always inclined to the radical side, to the side (in other words) trying to get at the roots of things—and grassroots has now become a favorite term among half-baked Americans—Kreymborg has meditated, tried various forms of artistic expression, travelled here and abroad. His German quality is of the very best sort, the amateur philosopher over a glass of beer and at a game of chess (and "no mean chess player he," would illiterate journalism say).

Alfred Kreymborg "is a man with a big heart and a fantastic mind."

As his chief medium has always been verse, I can understand why he wrote this wandering narrative in verse about what has been going on in the world, and to me it was like hearing a good relaxed conversation. The manner of it is quite in keeping with the man, himself and his shadow. He worked hard at it too; he wanted to get a great deal into it, though his technical skill as a poet is sometimes not equal to the task. That is a criticism. In our poetry Kreymborg has been at his best as acrobat and juggler, in a variant of the Pagliacci, "He Who Gets Slapped," and "Laugh, Clown, Laugh" tradition. And he has created a troubadour personality for

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himself which is engaging and bears credentials to the Court of the Muses; he is a man with a big heart and a fantastic mind, in poetry a puppet-showman whose barbs (to mix metaphors) directed at the shams of society are always feathered, though in the present book there are some heavinesses—because, after all, atomic energy has now decided to get up, as Gulliver got up when he was staked out by the Lilliputians—and that makes all of us more serious. I do not mind the spiritual heaviness; the heavinesses of style I could wish away.

Kreymborg is, and always has been, a fighter as well as a philosopher. He is a very companionable sort, and I think of him chiefly as "Human Being," borrowing the title of an excellent novel by Christopher Morley which has received far too little general acclaim. The most particular poets will contend, I know, that he has not written poetry here. For they are always desperately trying to hedge-in poetry and limit it to some one particular kind; the very particular poets and the very particular critics; and if you get out of bounds with those high-brow boys and girls you can never, never, never amount to anything any more. Well, Alfred doesn't care so much about that. He wanted to sit down and talk awhile to the world; and he has done so, engagingly, fierily, humanly, tediously, sometimes stereotypedly, often with his own inimitable turn of thought.

This is a good book for Americans to read, because it embodies much of what Americans should be, of what they like to think they are and so often are not. The real Kreymborg, of course, jumps clean through his paper hoops at the end and lands in a design for a ballet, where he is superbly at home. And I am going to try an innovation, and a review write that's quite without quotation. What would be the use of handing you gratis some of Kreymborg's best quips, conveying to you his profoundest meditations, giving away his best dramatic episodes? Harry Hansen has noted that Kreymborg is the poet of human beings and his book merely endorses that truth. If all human beings read it they would be better human beings. That is a great deal to have done in a book. The mighty line, the great phrase, the precision of word, the deathless music, perhaps they visit this book rarely; but the gift is here of a warm humanity, of a real person, of one whose comment on human affairs is worth listening to. Such a book is a gift even if you pay five dollars for it. For a man of sixty-three, as is the poet, it sets the capstone on an edifice built out of blood and sweat, tears and laughter.

The Humanism of John Dewey

PROBLEMS OF MAN. By John Dewey. New York: Philosophical Library. 1946. 424 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by ORDWAY TEAD

FOR constant and persistent variations on the theme of democracy as man's great institutional educator, and on scientific method and temper as the attitudes productive of socially helpful conduct, John Dewey stands without peer as philosophy's grand old man—lifelong protagonist of the promise of a humane life for the common man. Here in a collection of seventeen papers bearing on education in a democracy and fourteen papers grouped as "Value and Thought" and "About Thinkers," America's greatest native philosopher assembles his shorter utterances of the last ten years. Nor

does time diminish their essential freshness and perennial wisdom. The very title of the book bears witness to a relentless humanism of outlook which insists that the connectedness of mind and life must yield us worthy fruits; and that philosophy's task is none other than to unfold, interpret, and enrich this connection.

Since the half of the volume which discusses education will have the widest appeal to Dewey's large and devoted audience, it is on that half that this review will be centered. No one has shown more clearly than he the fallacy of our separation in thought and in operation of vocational and liberal education. How right his comment is that "the movement in the direction of industrial, vocational, technical, and professional education has not come to grips either with the understanding of what the social forces and needs of the present are or of how things might be done to insure an ever-growing democratic life."

How sound he is in treating of educational administration when he reminds us that "large systems work almost automatically toward isolation of the administrator"! And on greater teacher participation and the accusation that teachers "are not prepared to assume the responsibility of participation," he comments, "it is still also true that incapacity to assume the responsibilities involved in having a voice in shaping policies is bred and increased by conditions in which that responsibility is denied."

It is when he discusses the relation of knowledge to understanding and to action that his thought seems to carry a burden, if not of confusion, at least of ambiguity and acknowledgement of a problem not fully resolved. Surely one does not have to move into any area of "theological apologetics" to call attention to the toughness of the issue he poses when he says that "the schools should have given them some sort of intellectual and moral key to their contemporary world." "As for methods," he adds, "the prime need of every person at present is capacity to think; the power to see problems, to relate facts to them, to use and enjoy ideas. If a young man or woman comes from school with this power, all other things may be in time added to him. He will find himself intellectually and morally."

Do the "may" and the "will" of the last two sentences hang together? What *is* the assurance that good action will ensue out of this power to think straight? If that which *may* be added in time is not in fact added, where do we look to find the drive to keep up thinking relentlessly and solving problems conscientiously?

"There are," he says, "ultimately but three forces that control society—habit, coercive and violent force, and action directed by intelligence." And in a similar vein, "The problem is one that, by its own terms, can be dealt with only by the continuous application of the scientific method of experimental observation and test." And again, "The purpose and business of philosophy is wholly with that part of the historic tradition called search for wisdom—namely, search for the ends and values that give direction to our collective human activities."

Surely, the search for ends and values is not *solely* an affair of the critical reason. Surely the influence of love and of the esthetic urge affects importantly both ends and means in human life. Surely an accounting for the springs of social motive and for the drives toward social obligation and responsibility has to go beyond an experimental outlook if we are to have "some sort of intellectual and moral key" to our world.

For Dewey the key seems to be in a *special* meaning assigned to "understanding." There is "no guarantee that the acquisition and accumulation of knowledge will create the at-

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titudes that generate intelligent action." Rather there has also to be added that "understanding" which "has to be in terms of how things work and how to do things. Understanding, by its very nature, is related to action." Yet the extent to which understanding is related to the desire to act and can account for shortcomings in action seems not adequately covered by such an account.

One surely is entitled to believe that it is no betrayal of the acknowledged importance of intelligence, reason, and scientific method and of the need for its more radical use in social affairs to affirm that the yearnings of the human mind and heart are not satisfied solely in terms of that which is rationally understood.

Somehow with an eager assent to most that Dewey says and stands for, one cannot but feel that his world and his account of it as here reflected are not the whole story. The emphasis tends to ignore areas of genuine value in experience (which William James, for example, has both awareness of and curiosity about). It is true that too many still identify as "supernatural" forces of human support and inspiration that Dewey would call "natural." In his volume "A Common Faith" there is more explicit acknowledgment of the warmer and more emotive phases which are general in experience. The need for some definite sense of support and the need to be aroused and held to truly social courses of action are still urgent needs, even though our author in his own dedicated person does not feel them as needs. His major interest is thus critical; and he is less concerned with efforts at any possible affirmation about those reaches of the human spirit which extend out beyond his great affirmation as to the instrumental value of reason. Is it unfair to say that we have here a dynamism of the mind and feel the lack of a dynamism for the whole person in travail in his world?

All of this, be it said again, is not to deny or to belittle the greatness of John Dewey or of his formative influences in American educational and philosophic life. In stature he towers above the surrounding intellectual landscape. And this work is one more evidence of this preëminence. But this reviewer, at least, feels in honor bound to record a question as to what may not unfairly be called the onesidedness of his treatment and at bottom the brittleness if not bleakness of that world in which his mind moves with such extraordinary precision and vigor.

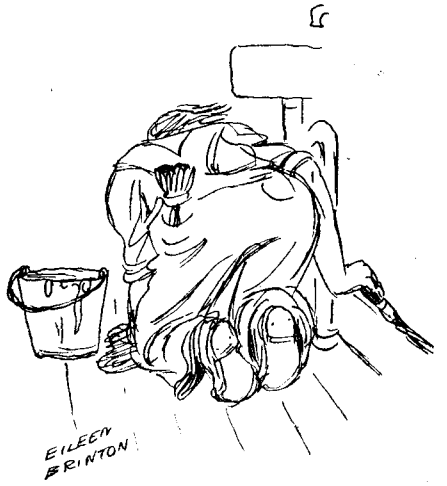
Strictly Personal

THOREAU FINDS A HOUSE

HOW Henry Thoreau solved his own Transcendental housing shortage is well known. He built for himself, without priorities. Contractors' charges vary now in different parts of the country, but they seem to run somewhere around eight dollars a building foot. The house at Walden, as Thoreau audits his figures, cost five dollars a foot—a little high for those days even though a brick fireplace was included. Labor after all came free.

During the past winter I have observed more than one fellow veteran look longingly for a Walden, even at five dollars the foot. The idea, however, of erecting one's own home is somewhat spartan and impractical for days like these. To tell the truth, Thoreau himself realized that he had found no universal solution; and so he indulged, close to a century ago, in one of the most popular pastimes of 1946: house-hunting for a friend. But things were different then.

The friend was Daniel Ricketson, New Bedford Quaker, slight, bearded, and aquiline. He let Henry Thoreau know that he wanted to move to Concord, and as a result Thoreau bestirred himself on behalf of the New Bedford man. That he kept a shrewd eye open is shown by several letters that include hints on Concord housing—cheap. Thoreau was not unworldly; he had his notions about real estate. In testimony note this letter, hitherto unpublished, from him to Ricketson. The house is the main reason for writing. It is furnished, has a garden, and can probably be bought for a thousand or so less than the asking price. Well, how about it?



Concord May 13 57.

Friend Ricketson

A recent neighbor of ours, Wm. W. Wheildon, having heard that you talked somewhat of moving to Concord (for such things will leak out) [the good old days!] has just been asking me to inform you that he will rent his house, which is a *furnished one*, with a garden, or sell the same, if you like them. It is a large house, the third below (East of) us on the same side of the street—was built some 20 years ago partly of old material, & since altered. The garden is a very good one, of about 2½ acres, with many fruit trees &c &c. Channing can tell you about it. When I ask his price, he merely answers "I think it worth $8000. But I would rather have Mr R. see it before I speak of the price." It could probably be bought for a thousand or two less. Indeed I have heard $6000 named. If you think seriously of coming to Concord to live, it will be worth your while to see it. His address is "Wm. W. Wheildon, Editor of the Bunker Hill Aurora, Charlestown Mass."—for he lives there at present. You would see his name over his office if you went there. Since you are so much attracted to New Bedford that it is doubtful if you can live any where else—would it not be safer—if you do anything about it—to hire first, with liberty to buy afterward at a price before agreed on?

My mother & sister join with me in saying that if you think it worth your while to look at the premises, we shall be glad of the opportunity to receive you with any of your family under our roof.

Since I left N. B. I have made several voyages equal to the circumnavigation of the Middleboro Ponds, and have done much work beside with my hands—In short, I am suddenly become much stouter than for the past 2 years.

Let me improve this opportunity to acknowledge the receit [so] of "Tom Bowling"— & the Mayflower — for which convey my thanks to the donor. His soul is gone aloft—his body only is epigaea repens (creeping over the earth). It has been sung & encored several times— & is duly made over to my sister & her piano.

In haste,

Yours truly

Henry D. Thoreau

Publication of the above letter is made possible through the courtesy of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, owners of the original manuscript.

CARL BODE.

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of Literature
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TAKE IT EASIER

THERE is a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time for study and a time for resignation or action. The American people have been going through a nerve-racking period during the last year. There was peace and yet the world was still technically at war. There was a new League of Nations based on the great powers. Our responsibilities towards a bankrupt, starving world, towards conquerors and conquered, seemed endless and more than a little frightening. From November 1941, when the sentiment of the country was half isolationist, to today, when our wealth, industrial resources, and military power force us into the lead of the democratic and still capitalist nations, we have compressed fifty years of normal political evolution. It took England a century to achieve world power and Japan and Germany half that time to reach a semblance of it.

Is it any wonder that when the war ended, and the lid was off the kettle, Americans boiled over? The second stage of a world revolution had ended leaving us on the top of a shaky edifice of international coöperation. We proceeded to talk the UN to death, dissect it, analyze it, satirize it, praise it until there were no words or ideas or pleasant surprises left. We have written and talked the atomic age and the atomic bomb to death, so that the world-important experiment at Bikini has appeared to be a sorry anti-climax to the public's anticipations. Our dramatic sense might have been satisfied with sinking all the ships present and blowing the atoll and its palm trees to dust, but the spectacle of a herd of living goats munching their cuds happily on the deck of the target ship after the explosion and the palm trees still waving their fronds on Bikini has been too much for us and perhaps for the rest of the world, too. Certainly the countries who have been listening to our atomic chatter and whose business it is to minimize to their own people the importance of a most formidable weapon have a splendid chance to continue this apparently mad course.

There has been far too much unsympathetic and rash talk about Russia, far too many columnists, correspondents, and inspired condensers of thought for the weekly journals of opinion who have used the words "the next war" as a corollary to their analysis of Russia's unilateral decisions. It is perhaps unfortunate that we have not yet talked Russia to death, that it remains the sole international subject on which we can gather for heated after-dinner discussions based on what has appeared in somebody's column or what has been heard over the air, or what somebody said to somebody else in private. America has become a vast ill-informed debating society for and against communism, for and against our or Russia's conception of security and world salvation. It is like a fiery town meeting without a moderator to restrain the crackpots, the diehards, and those whose first impulse it is to sock somebody on the jaw. And there are far too many people who now say with outthrust jaw and fire in their eyes, "It's coming; let's get it over with," remembering that we have the atomic bomb and the world's greatest navy. All of this is sheer lunacy, of course, but it is not amusing to listen to in the summer of 1946.

It is true that Russia is the most provocative subject in the world to discuss, partly because we know so little about that vast country except that it certainly does not want another war. Russia appears to run counter to our private scheme for the future, to have emasculated the UN with the veto, to insist on security at the expense of neighboring small countries, to be conducting propaganda against the political and social organization of foreign states, to be fostering, perhaps, world revolution. We have dramatized all this by adopting the title of Wendell Willkie's famous book as our slogan. We want "one world." Russia seems to be forcing us to make the best of two worlds. How many millions of words have been spilled about the danger of two worlds, followed in the minds of the writers and speakers inevitably by an atomic arms race and a war that will end civilization? How few words have been spent on the possibility of a peaceful two worlds, with the atomic bomb, lethal gasses, and germs outlawed! If our democratic socialist and capitalist societies cannot survive against the competition of communist dictatorships, then they must in any event be modified by the will of the people.

H. S.

Child Light

By Laura Benét

O LIGHT, so excellent, so gently good,
Bestowed like a libation on the earth,
A freshening dew upon the desperate heart,
The golden certainty of daily birth.

Your apparition in the quickened East
Is a bright trumpet for a valiant soul,
Silent and hopeless we were aliens here,
If over us an ocean's night should roll.

You rose upon the first green mysteries,
Primeval leaves and uncouth, clumsy beasts,
You were the kernel in the swelling grain,
The burning carpet for a million feasts.

With you ten thousand visions fill man's brain,
The dying and condemned acclaim your ray;
You warm the eyelids of the patient blind,
Bringing the transient kindliness of day.

A luminous arm outstretched, protesting death,
Signs our release from Dark's reluctant stream.
Light, like an innocent and trustful child,
You smile above each newly-buried dream.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

John Donne Falls Into Line

SIR: I have just seen (rather tardily) Miss Lois E. Langland's letter in the issue of June 18.

Mr. Thomas Sugrue should not be reproached for not taking me to task for something I did not do. In "Ho for Heaven!", far from saying or implying that John Donne lived in the eighteenth century, I make the following statement:

> A period is like a disease; it does not begin when it begins, but before; and long before 1700 the patient mankind exhibited symptoms. First a chill. Then an ague. Then the rigor of formalism. And immediately a "remedy" was applied —the tight bandage of reason.
>
> Feeling the premonitory symptoms of this disease, John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, rushed things; during the seventeenth century died a typically eighteenth-century death —meaning an elaborately self-conscious, ritualistic one, with his eyes less on God than the bystanders.

VIRGINIA MOORE.

Scottsville, Va.

Revieword

SIR: It doesn't bother *me* a bit,
But I know a girl who has a fit
When critics speak of some work's "pattern."
As a reader, my friend is nobody's slattern,
And since the word is used left and right,
We fear the end is close in sight.

F. L. OVERCARSH,
Lt. (jg), U.S.N.

Washington, D. C.

In Rebuttal

SIR: In your June 1 issue the book "Blood in the Streets" was reviewed by Wenzell Brown. I read the review with special interest because of my intimate knowledge of the Caribbean area and my acquaintance with the author, Albert C. Hicks, and your reviewer.

I, too, reviewed "Blood in the Streets" for my newspaper, in which I praised Mr. Hicks's work for its disclosure of the tyrannical regime of General Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. My newspaper published that review. The author of the book, Mr. Hicks, while employed by the Puerto Rico *World Journal*, wrote articles of a similar nature which also were published. The *World Journal* is owned by the publishers of *El Mundo*. I was editor of the *World Journal* when we published Hicks's articles exposing the Trujillo rule.

This background should help you understand my amazement in reading in the review written by Mr. Brown that Trujillo "controls the two largest newspapers" in Puerto Rico. That is an irresponsible statement that is completely without foundation and would be laughable were it not that circles unfamiliar with the organization it slanders and libels have accepted it as a fact. I speak, of course, only for *El Mundo* as I have no authority to speak for the other of the "two largest" newspapers, *El Imparcial*. But I am willing to give my personal opinion that Mr. Brown was equally libelous in making the charge against *El Imparcial*.

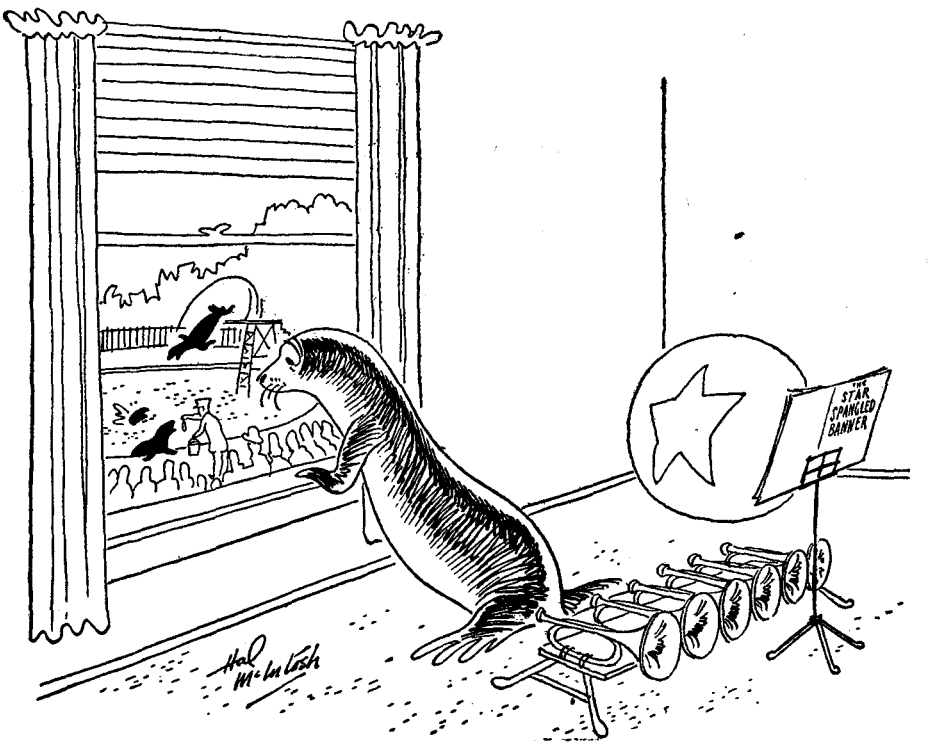
There are only two "large" newspapers in Puerto Rico. *El Dia* of Ponce is less than half as large as the two mentioned in circulation, and the others are small dailies or weeklies never considered seriously as being important newspapers in the island. The publishers of *El Mundo* are American citizens, financially and politically independent and in no manner dependent on or desirous of the good offices of the dictator of the Dominican Republic.

It may throw light on Mr. Brown's motives to know that both *El Mundo* and *El Imparcial* blasted his own book last year, "Dynamite on Our Doorstep," which purported to be a factual exposition of the life of the Puerto Rican people, their characteristics, and their attitude toward the United States.

I realize fully the responsibilities of an editor, and that it is difficult to determine when authors are taking in each other's washing in writing reviews of books when both are on the market simultaneously, but I sincerely hope that you will request that Mr. Brown elaborate on his charge of control of this newspaper by Gen. Trujillo, and that you publish whatever substantiating facts he has. He must have them, I assume, or he would not have made that charge.

WILLIAM J. DORVILLIER.

Washington, D. C.



SIR: Mr. Dorvillier has made a suggestion of the most serious nature when he accuses Mr. Hicks and myself of "taking in each other's washing in writing reviews of books which are on the market simultaneously." To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Hicks has never reviewed a book of mine, although recently, after the publication of my review, we appeared on a radio program together.

As Mr. Dorvillier knows, I am working at present on a book about the Caribbean which will include chapters on the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Every advantage would lie, as far as I am concerned personally, in my silence concerning a book covering the same material. The value of presenting the material contained in Mr. Hicks's book to the public is of far more importance than any financial loss I may suffer from advocating this excellent book.

Mr. Dorvillier seems to be very eager to place *El Mundo* in the category mentioned in my review. Perhaps where the shoe fits—. If *El Mundo* is under suspicion of being influenced by Trujillo, the Falange, etc., it can surely clear itself by the simple expedient of an attack on fascist activities so prominent in Puerto Rican life. May I suggest that an exposé of case No. 5625 (United States of America *v.* Jose Manuel Jarabo Perez-Morris) in the Federal Court would do much to stop rumors of financial chicanery.

I am not in a position to give *El Mundo* a clean slate. May I state, too, as Mr. Dorvillier well knows, that a few weeks after its attack on Trujillo, the *World Journal* was discontinued. Reporters with whom I talked felt that these two events were not coincidental. The impression left with me after reading Mr. Dorvillier's review of "Blood in the Streets" as it appeared in *El Mundo* was of words most skillfully used.

WENZELL BROWN.

New York, N. Y.

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TRADE Winds

ONE OF THE ODDEST stories of the year lies behind the sudden withdrawal by the publishers of a mystery novel that was just beginning to roll. The book is called "I Hate Blondes"; the author, Wolfe Kaufman, is an established and extremely well-liked theatrical publicity counsel. Simon and Schuster had sold out a first edition of 9000 copies, and a second printing of 2000 was ready at the bindery. Then the blow fell.

In one day, Lee Wright, crackerjack editress of Inner Sanctum mysteries, received phone calls from unidentified readers in three different cities calling attention to the fact that over thirty sentences in "I Hate Blondes" were copied word for word from Eric Ambler's "Background to Danger"! A comparison of the two books confirmed the allegations.

Kaufman was dumbfounded. He explained that he had read the Ambler book a long time ago and that "photographic memory," a phenomenon he had noted in himself before, had returned to plague him. At first blush, such an alibi sounds mighty farfetched, but close examination of the facts in this case clearly support Kaufman's contention. The copied sentences all occur in a single minor episode in his book that might have been omitted entirely without ruining the story. And Kaufman's rueful remark, "If I had wanted to copy another book, I certainly wouldn't have picked one so currently popular and outstanding as 'Background to Danger,'" is too obviously true to brook any doubt.

Eric Ambler, apprised of the situation, was understanding and generous, and so were his publishers. The withdrawal of the book was entirely voluntary on the part of Simon and Schuster, who are urging Kaufman to keep plugging at a second novel upon which he already had embarked.

The author's dilemma, of course, is clear: how can he be certain that that trick "photographic memory" won't betray him again? Meanwhile, Wallace Brockway suggests that "I Hate Blondes" be reissued, with the blessing of everybody concerned, as "Forever Ambler." . . .

VARIETY'S ABEL GREEN, whose memory is more infallible than that of Seattle's Addison Sims, remembers a parallel to the Ambler-Kaufman mix-up that had rather more sinister implications. The late Bob Sherwood (no relation to the famous playwright), who did a lot of tall reminiscing about his life as a clown with Barnum and Bailey while his wife, a truly wonderful woman, slaved to keep their downtown bookshop in the black, was "prevailed upon" to put his stories into book form. "Hold Yer Hosses" he called it, and all went well until John Wilstach spotted wholesale appropriations from a circus series he had written for *Collier's* some years before. Because everybody admired and respected Mrs. Sherwood, the matter was hushed up, the mortified publisher recompensed Wilstach, and the unabashed culprit continued cheerfully telling the stories as his own until the day he died. . . .

THIS IS ILLUSTRATION number 968 of why I think the publishing business is the most glamorous and exciting in the world. In 1942, my firm published Cecil Brown's "Suez to Singapore," which I still consider one of the best of all the war books. Cecil Brown devoted one section of it to the exploits of a great submarine lieutenant named "Moon" Chapple. When "Moon," 230 pounds of superb efficiency, good humor, and better looks, returned (now a captain) to America, I had the privilege of meeting him, and, better still, he invited me to climb aboard one of his subs for a trial spin.

I have just returned from the New London base, where, through the courtesy of Admiral John Wilkes and Captain Chapple, I went out on the 313-foot super-submarine *Sirago*, and experienced the thrill of four dives in Long Island Sound. The sub was handled so perfectly by Commander Fritz Harlflinger and his crew of eighty that had my attention not been riveted on the periscope and instruments, I could scarcely have told when we were submerging or coming to the surface. Aside from a slight tilt, there was no sensation whatever. The excitement came in watching the operation through the periscope.

A long course of indoctrination via the movies proved utterly futile: no beautiful Madge Evans was stowed away in an ensign's duffle bag, nor was a cook's apprentice called upon to perform an emergency operation for acute appendicitis.

After the last dive, the crew was ordered to rush on deck and man the guns for immediate action. Unfortunately, I was designated as a lookout and ordered to follow the skipper up the hatch. It took me only slightly longer to negotiate this maneuver than the eighty members of the crew combined. When the operation was completed, "Moon" lauded my magnificent dexterity, but could not resist adding, "Of course, by the time you managed to climb out, we could have been sunk by a rowboat."

A few moments later, while we were proceeding at full speed, the cry "Man overboard"! rang out. "Good God!" exclaimed my host. "It's Cerf!" It developed, however, that this was merely another drill. The "man" was a yellow balloon, and the crew retrieved it in a choppy sea in less than four minutes.

Men in the submarine service receive fifty per cent more pay than in the regular Navy, and they are worth it. They are wonderful boys. The censors did all they could to keep the public from realizing the full scope of the submarine force's contribution

"He said his first word today—'antidisestablishmentarianism.'"

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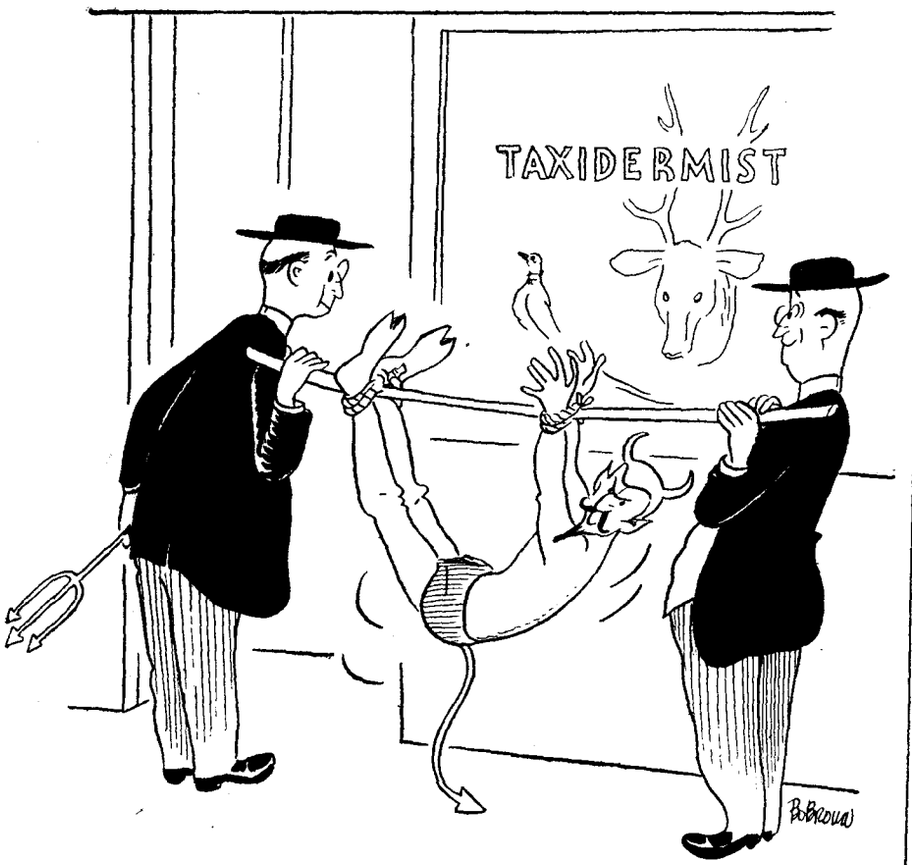


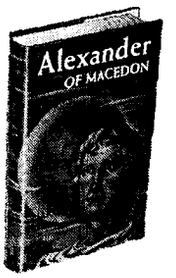
to the winning of the war, but the true story slowly is becoming available. If you have a copy of "Suez to Singapore" handy, check up on Captain "Moon" Chapple (pages 462 to 471). Cecil omitted mention only of "Moon's" wife, Grace, and his handling of an automobile, both of which are breath-taking. . . .

CHARLIE CHAPLIN is making his first picture in six years. It is called "Comedy of Murders," and is vaguely patterned on the career of Bluebeard. Chaplin, for the first time in his career, will not appear as the famous "Charlie," but will be seen as the dapper little Frenchman whose brazen acts sent Parisian society into a furore. The press has been very nasty to Chaplin in recent years, and possibly he deserves much of the censure that has been heaped upon his head, but I cannot help remembering that he has provided me with more genuine cobweb-dispelling laughter than any other four comedians in the world combined. . . . E. J. Carrel, sales manager of the University of Oklahoma Press, believes he has a title with possibilities exceeding "Lincoln's Doctor's Dog." It is Carl Coke Rister's "Robert E. Lee in Texas." "Could anybody ask for more than LEE and TEXAS in one title?" he asks. California correspondents, please note. . . . Hanson Kellog brings Coleridge up to date:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
And that was that. The puissant man
Continued living in a tree,
Complaining through his broken slumber:
"Decrees don't change trees into lumber." . . .

AN EXECUTIVE AT Denhard, Pfeiffer, and Wells is seeking a sponsor for a movement to teach receptionists, switchboard operators, and secretaries to tell callers (A) after 10 A.M. and (B) after 3 P.M., simply that "Mr. Zrmph is not in"—instead of (A) "Mr. Zrmph has not come in YET" or (B) "Mr. Zrmph has not RETURNED FROM LUNCH." A long-suffering victim of this form of exposure myself, I can render no assistance, but would be happy to hear from resourceful contributors who have discovered remedies. . . . I am reminded of Myra Thompson's story of the secretary of the president of a famous university in Ohio. She took a long-distance call for him one morning when he was not in his office, and thinking that only the university operator was on the line, reported cheerfully, "I think he's gone to the john." Unfortunately, the line was open and every operator between the Ohio university and Pasadena, California, heard her, not to mention the trustee who had initiated the call. Solicitous operators all over the country spent the rest of the day calling the university and inquiring sweetly, "Has the president returned to his office yet?" BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"



FROM where I sit I can see four other desks and there isn't much room to take verbal punches at things that I do not like.

But everyonceina while something irks me. Right now I am thinking of a review of HAROLD LAMB'S **Alexander of Macedon** which appeared in this magazine not long ago. Mr. LAMB has written an able reply to the author of that review, and there's absolutely no need for me to put in my two cents' worth.

But it does bring up a question which deserves a little consideration, because it comes up almost every time a book is published. That question is, how can the critic keep his own shirt on while he is taking the pants (not to mention the jacket) off a book? It's a neat feat, and if he can do it, his scathing review becomes even more effective. But the critic seldom does keep his own shirt on when he gets mad, and instead of censuring him and going and buying the book anyway, we mere mortals get the smell of powder in our nostrils and we just sit back and watch the pyrotechnics.

Alexander of Macedon, for example, was criticized on the grounds that it had no justification by "standards of historical scholarship." Now if you're living in a world where issues of the moment like Iranian oil, and who's going to get bases where, and how far you can go in controlling a political election in Greece are the issues which may well be decisive factors in the life of your children, all the historical scholarship in the world isn't going to help you one bit. I remember reading Stephen Bonsal's reports on the Peace Conference in 1919. There were issues of similar import at stake there. But what happened? The boys just sat back in private compartments in trains to Istanbul and talked about how the Persians were largely agrarian and that shepherds used goatskin bags to carry water on camels' backs while they walked behind on foot over hot sands.

What happened was that the sands got so hot, the historical scholarship didn't help much. We are living in a world of issues to be met. They must be met in books as well as in conferences. And the best way to meet them is to get a vivid picture of them. HAROLD LAMB manages to give so clear a picture of ancient times, that it seems to apply to today. He is not writing for History 32-B. That has been done. He is writing for you. The critic's job is to review the book the author wrote and not the one he thinks the author should have written.

paul

DOUBLEDAY

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HEARING THINGS

UNIONS, OLD AND NEW

THE anti-Petrillo bill has been enacted by Congress, and now the fiery ex-musician will have to watch his step. Well, Petrillo is arrogant and his union is guilty of a good many excesses, yet only a few years ago the musicians were as mercilessly exploited as any of their brethren in the sweatshops. The whole thing resolves into the simple fact that curbing the unions and their leaders is not a cure for the ills that beset the profession; what we and they need is education and enlightenment. Labor would do well to develop better leaders who will not counter abuses with more abuses, but will correct those that exist. Unionization in itself is no remedy either, for the protection thus extended to the many people who would make better day laborers than musicians does not help the rest of the fraternity. Everyone knows that the "examinations" administered by the locals for the sake of "classification" of new members is a joke. To force the radio stations to employ supernumeraries, to interrupt a rehearsal because it exceeds the contractual time by a few minutes, to declare the fellow who turns the discs when recordings are re-broadcast a musician, a skilled worker, are abuses pure and simple, even though I cannot make my heart bleed for either the radio or the phonograph industry.

It would be a great mistake to think, however, that Mr. Petrillo's acts are something new under the sun. Unionism, or whatever we call it, is as old as music itself. We do not have to refer to ancient times, to the association of singers in the temple, to Justinian's corps of mimes, or to the old wandering minstrels of the earlier Middle Ages. They flourished but had little power, since they were in bad odor with the Church. The later Middle Ages produced some real unions which were powerful enough to remove the *turpitudo* attached to the minstrels by the suspicious ecclesiastical authorities. Such associations as the Trumpeters' Guild in Lucca, the Brotherhood of St. Nicholas in Vienna, or St. Julien's Minstrels in Paris, were serious organizations, jealously watching over their rights. Mr. Petrillo would no doubt gladly exchange his vaunted "international" presidency for the position held by his ancient predecessors, for they were called kings, while the local bigwigs lorded it as viceroys. And they pretty nearly commanded the prerogatives of royal personages. The King of Fiddlers of the Swiss federation of musicians actually negotiated what amounted to a concordat with the Holy See, and the Council of Basle in 1430 recognized the musicians' guilds as respectable societies. The social position of these "labor leaders" was steadily improving; the kings of fiddlers or pipers soon had not only viceroys but marshals and counts who ran the locals. They also concerned themselves with the professional education of new members and apprentices—something our musicians' unions ignore altogether.

But these good people also had their troubles, mainly "jurisdictional." Once union—or rather guild—activities became widespread, some sort of official supervision became necessary; therefore superintendents were appointed to regulate their affairs in the free cities. Here the trouble started in earnest. In Hamburg, for instance, the musicians who specialized in playing at weddings came under the jurisdiction of the chief municipal *stollen* baker who, after all, furnished the most important item for the wedding. Lully, Louis XIV's great court composer, was superintendent of all music in France, at the same time holding the position of chamber valet to his majesty. The first jurisdictional strife that called for the equivalent of a Congressional investigation occurred toward the end of the seventeenth century when the French fiddlers' union attempted to gobble up the organists' and dancing masters' unions. The warfare lasted for decades and was so destructive that in the end the fiddlers' union was suspended.

Unlike our modern union, which holds that "there is no difference between Heifetz and a tavern fiddler," the oldsters were very class conscious. They refused to admit to membership "unlettered tramps," "beer fiddlers," military musicians, and foreigners. They were especially wary —shades of Interlaken—of student orchestras, which they tried to sabotage and hinder because the students played for fun only. (I am quite sure that Mr. Petrillo does not know about these historical precedents, and hope that his lawyer will not spend the rest of his life in the archives of the old university towns in Europe.) By and by the municipal musicians in the German towns, the dance and entertainment orchestras, and the funeral bands formed their own unions, which watched each other with an eagle eye. In 1590 the Lutherans in Weissenfels organized a musical society devoted to "the praise of the Lord, order, honesty, the practice of music, furthering of the divine service, and the enjoyment (*sic*) of a decent burial." The chronicles testify that all these aims were duly enacted into law by the city council and ratified in 1592. The new guild, apparently especially interested in the funeral aspects of its functions, acquired a magnificent grave cloth which covered the coffin during the ceremonies. With the mortality rate of those times, the grave cloth was in great demand, and the astute board of directors began to lend it for use in services other than theirs. A suitable fee was charged, of course, and business was thriving until it was discovered that

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CYRIL CONNOLLY

The publication of THE CONDEMNED PLAYGROUND will be considered by many critics as one of the most important events of the current publishing season. For Cyril Connolly is the brilliant editor of *Horizon,* the English literary monthly which has become the rallying point for everything that is young and vital in present-day English thought. His recent book, *The Unquiet Grave,* received an unusual amount of attention from the critics.

Jacques Barzun opened a recent *Atlantic Monthly* article by saying, "The name of Cyril Connolly should be better known than it is to American readers" — and THE CONDEMNED PLAYGROUND will undoubtedly accomplish this purpose, for it contains 36 of Mr. Connolly's finest essays. The essays in THE CONDEMNED PLAYGROUND include:

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THOMAS MANN
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NINETY YEARS OF NOVEL-REVIEWING
MORE ABOUT THE MODERN NOVEL
DEFECTS OF ENGLISH NOVELS
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MR. MOSSBROSS TAKES THE CLASS
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THE NOVEL-ADDICT'S CUPBOARD
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TOLD IN GATH
WHERE ENGELS FEARS TO TREAD
YEAR NINE
WHAT WILL HE DO NEXT
AN UNFORTUNATE VISIT
ACKERMANN'S ENGLAND
SPRING REVOLUTION
BARCELONA
ENGLAND NOT MY ENGLAND
CONVERSATIONS IN BERLIN
THE FATE OF AN ELIZABETHAN
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this was really a matter for the textile industry, and indeed the tailors' guild protested vehemently the musicians' right to deal with tapestry or clothing of any sort. The city council after long deliberation reached a politically sound decision. Both parties could engage in the cover-renting business, but since the idea originated with the musicians the tailors' grave cloth must display prominently their guild's emblems, so that the citizens might know under whose auspices they were being protected for their last journey. Much could be said about the very modern system of operation employed in the various locals. If a man migrated to a different city he had to pay an initiation fee to the new local and was not permitted to practise his trade until a certain time had elapsed. Bribery, too, was rife, and was practised along the most familiar lines.

The unions must look after the welfare of their members, but this welfare is not always measured in wage scales. By forcing an employer to hire a man who has no qualifications whatsoever to exercise the musical profession, the union merely plays into the hands of an already over-commercialized and ruthless business—the music industry. If Mr. Petrillo thinks that he has solved the problems of unionism in the field of music he is greatly mistaken. His strong-arm methods have brought some relief and security to musicians, but they have alienated many people and have not been concerned with the basic labor problems in music, which are indeed sinister as far as the future is concerned. Just as talking pictures eliminated thousands of movie orchestras, radio, television, and the phonograph are cutting down the numbers of grade-B musicians rapidly. Even the lowliest dance orchestra or the sound effect ensembles that pollute God's fresh air often employ players who could take their place in a first-class symphony orchestra. There will be no room for mediocre professional players, and as to the rest, one can only shudder at the thought of what is in store for them. They could, of course, go to work in some other field and become useful citizens, but that is a far-fetched idea and does not figure in Mr. Petrillo's plans. The very serious fact remains, however, that this course of events will inevitably create a new group for whom there is no possible remedy in sight if both the music industry and labor persist in their present methods and ideas.

PAUL HENRY LANG.

John Mason Brown is in London for SRL. Seeing Things will be omitted until he returns.

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Adventure Plus

HORNED PIGEON. By George Millar. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 434 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by RICHARD PLANT

JOHN BUCHAN would have liked "Horned Pigeon." Alfred Hitchcock should make a movie out of it. For the whole book is a single chase. George Millar, a young British officer, has been captured by the Germans in Africa and put into several Italian and German prison camps. After several unsuccessful tries, he manages to escape from Stalag VIIA near Moosburg in Bavaria, makes his way through a France teeming with Gestapo agents, and finally reaches Spain where, after a while, the British Consulate takes over.

Millar calmly describes the hairbreadth escapes, the agonizing hours of waiting, of pain and hunger, frustrations and restlessness which went with each step of his journey. Occasionally one can't help marveling at his energy.

The book is intensely personal. George Millar, one is tempted to say, is so relentlessly frank about his fears, frustrations, and obsessions that one comes to know him like a friend. His book begins to transcend the pure adventure story the moment he starts telling about his personal likes and dislikes and those of his companions. For he is exceedingly shrewd in assessing a man's character, unusually expert in describing a person's physical and mental make-up in a few sentences. His figures are as three-dimensional as the figures in a good novel—a rare achievement in any personalized adventure story.

One is tempted to admire Millar not only for his stubbornness, ingenuity, and vitality—his action-qualities, so to speak—but for his ability to note incongruous and bizarre details under circumstances which would have left most of his readers in a state of fear-ridden dumbness. One can't help wondering at the lack of plain, ordinary common sense which contributed just as much to the capture of many people as the vigilance of the German army and Gestapo. Millar is patient with the lady who plans a dangerous night-escape in high-heeled shoes, with his sex-obsessed companions who start love affairs under the most inconvenient circumstances. As a matter of fact, friend Millar is much more patient with them than the reader is likely to be, and this only contributes to the charm and personal appeal of his book.

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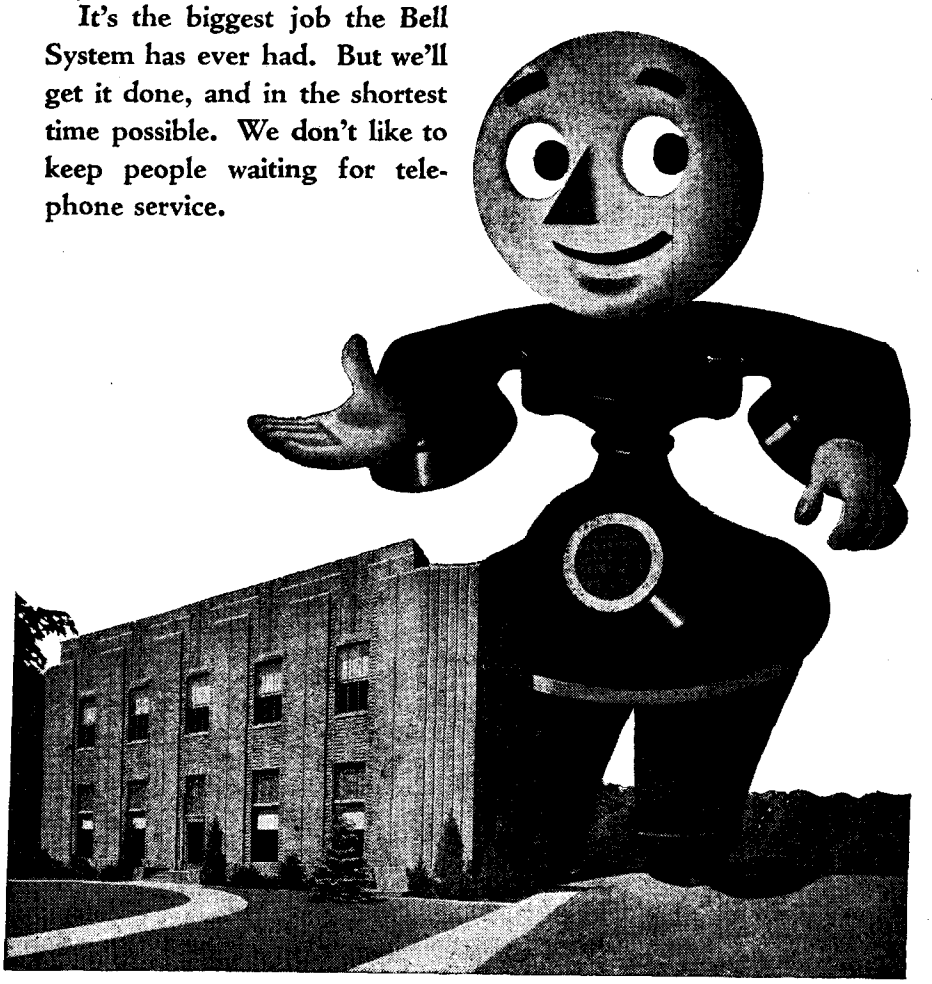

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Information, Thank You

A BOOK ABOUT A THOUSAND THINGS, By George Stimpson. New York: Harper and Bros. 1946. 552 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by BAUKHAGE

THIS book is a "poisonous piece of work and ought to be suppressed by the police," according to H. L. Mencken, who picked it up for a casual glance and "stuck to it for three hours."

George Stimpson calls himself a "pack-rat of information." He has pack-ratted through six volumes of this sort, including his highly successful "Book About the Bible." A pack-rat always leaves something in exchange when he takes something away. Stimpson has been taking information away for a quarter of a century, piece by piece, and packing it back in neat packages, this time a thousand to the package.

Elbert Hubbard said knowledge

consisted in having a secretary who knew where to find the darn thing. In Washington, where Stimpson plies his trade of correspondent and columnist, we don't need secretaries. Congressmen and copyreaders, toastmasters and master-plumbers, anybody who knows Stimpson's telephone number lets George do it. And, generous pack-rat that he is, he delivers, even if he hasn't a crumb of knowledge to carry back beyond what he shares.

Stimpson's professional hackles rise at the word debunker. He doesn't start out to prove you're wrong but to see if it can be proved that you're right. It's a soothing process, taking you gently but firmly by your cerebrum and leading you expertly and interestingly to the truth, not omitting to point out the attractive untruths along the way.

Unlike the pack-rat, but with the foresight of the White Knight, Stimpson keeps his nuggets handy ("Nuggets of Knowledge" was the name of an earlier package offering). I remember one day when he was presiding over an affair at the National Press Club at which President Franklin Roosevelt was guest of honor. The late George Holmes of beloved and pungent memory was present and had given the President a fill-in on Stimpson's literary background. The President, always quick to strike the personal note, turned to Stimpson and asked how he got to the root of his facts.

"I always go to the foremost authority when I can," said George, poker-faced, and added, "for instance, I did that when I wanted to know how to pronounce the name Roosevelt."

The President, who was genealogically allergic, asked quickly, "*What* authority?"

"Well, here it is," replied George, pulling an eight-year-old letter from his pocket. It was from the Governor's Mansion, Albany, signed Franklin D. Roosevelt. (You can read it on page 108 of "A Book About a Thousand Things.")

If the late President were alive he would probably turn to page 108 and read his letter again. He probably would have read the next two items, too, for they pertain to the sea: Where does the word dungaree come from? Where did the schooner get its name?

Maybe that was what caught the eye of William Hassett, the late President's secretary (and also the incumbent's) when he took up Stimpson's book. Anyhow it is of record that Hassett stuck at it through the period usually allotted to perusing the morning papers. I mention this because inscribed on a picture of Mr. Roosevelt are these words: "To Bill Hassett, a rare combination of Bucknell, Bartlett, and Roget." So we have another modicum of praise from Sir Hubert Stanley. Sir Hubert Stanley? See pp. 119-20.

Whatever else Mr. Stimpson's latest opus, or perhaps I should say opera, is, I hope I have demonstrated that it is a mine for the blurb-writer—perhaps one of the thousand reasons which made the Book-of-the-Month Club choose it as a recent dividend.

STAGE

"A VERY BIG HIT."—Walter Winchell

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Colonel Vamooses

GOLDEN EARRINGS. By Yolanda Foldes. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1946. 239 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

HERE is another fantastic tale out of Nazi-occupied Europe, written with little concern for factual, or even credible, background material, but written with some gaiety and with so much gusto that one soon stops looking at the characters involved as really connected with the horrors of German tyranny and the heroism of the fight against it.

A middle-aged, yet still dashing, British colonel—so the story goes—succeeds in his getaway from a POW camp somewhere in eastern Germany and is picked up by a lonely gipsy woman who with her horse-drawn cart trudges along the highway. Lydia's husband happens to serve a prison term, and presently the attractive, mature woman takes possession of the officer thrown into her lap. She promises to convoy him to safety.

The account of the trek of the uneven couple and the colonel's often-delayed escape soon gets lost sight of in the colorful mesh of the love story. The breakdown of super-British mores (as seen by a Hungarian cosmopolite) under the spell of a vigorous, passionate woman makes an amusing farce, and sometimes even a little bit more. Mme. Foldes's art is not quite up to the subtlety and the risks of the situation; but her intensity in portraying the colonel's growing astonishment at himself and his waxing delight in his strange mistress compensates on the whole for the loss of such finer treatment as the reader might have hoped for in the beginning. If this little novel had been written by a man, one would be tempted to trace the occasional wistfulness of its approach; as it is, one must admire Mme. Foldes's understanding of male psychology. How Lydia's submissiveness gains power over the man is shown very convincingly. When the colonel returns to his paramour on parting the golden earrings she has added to his disguise as "her man" in the first days of their association, the reader understands why the gentleman's eyes "grow misty."

The responsibility for the authenticity of all the gipsy folklore told in these pages remains, of course, with the author. But after the first shock caused by the re-encounter with a milieu which we thought long discarded by modern novelists, one enjoys its bright-colored facets.

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The Fight to Save Warsaw

SILENT IS THE VISTULA. By Irena Orska. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1946. 275 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HAROLD FIELDS

THE focal point of all history has moved from the factual, objective element of political and military movements to the more poignant, penetrating, sentient area of the fate and the progress of human beings. The tragedy of man's efforts to be free is crystallized in "Silent Is the Vistula." When Hegel wrote that "the history of the world is none other than the progress of consciousness of freedom," he was foretelling the Battle of Warsaw that is so vividly and despairingly described by Mme. Orska in these pages. It is from the travails and struggle of daily fighting, such as are set down in this volume, that the materials for the history of World War II will be gathered. This is a tragic tale of frustrated, prayerful hope, of human emotions torn asunder by sanguinary scenes, of faith carrying on despite the certainty of failure, of growing hatreds nurtured anew almost every living moment, of selflessness and the sharing of one's own sustenance with others in the face of dying death in buried cellars or living death in German camps. It is a grand, stirring, brave, inspiring tale of man's indomitable will to retain his rights as man.

"Silent Is the Vistula" is the story of the Warsaw uprising in 1944 when the Russian Army stood poised on the other side of the Vistula, presumably ready to join the patriotic Polish Army in its struggle to expel the Germans. For sixty-three days, the home army fought, in streets, in cellars, in buildings, behind street cars, in schools, and in hospitals. Women left their children to fight, and children left their homes to become warriors. And as day succeeded day, and week succeeded week, their wearied eyes turned to the Vistula to seek a sign of help from the well-equipped Russian divisions—but the further shore of the Vistula was silent.

All who listened to the radio commentators and read the correspondents' dispatches must recall that inexplicable story of the sweep of the Russian Army toward Germany that stopped at the gates of Warsaw. Debate was rife about the cause: it was political, it was occasioned by the need of bringing up supplies, it was part of a conflict to drive a bargain with the opposing Polish statesmen and their parties. General Bor (who has just arrived in the States) was sent for and later dismissed. Russia sought to overrun Germany, but she would not aid this home army of the Poles, who at first were successful in their onslaught. Why the delay? Why the refusal to coöperate for Russia's own good as well of Poland's? The situation at that time caused suspicion and doubt; Russia's prestige, then at its height, began to drop because of this desertion of an ally in its moment of sorest need.

Irena Orska writes "a grand, stirring, brave, inspiring tale of man's indomitable will to retain his rights as man."

The protracted, unsupported fighting that is so vividly described in this story makes one feel the enormity of Poland's grievance against the Russian forces and the Russian state.

Their trust in the Soviet Army was deep when first the home forces began their defense. "The Soviet Army had come closer to Warsaw every day. We had counted the miles impatiently until there were not enough miles to count. We heard the rumble of the Soviet artillery across the Vistula, and daily the Russian planes roared overhead bombing Warsaw. We heard Soviet broadcasts in Polish exhorting us all to take up arms and help their offensive. . . . We could not fail. God was with us. Right was with us. Our Allies were with us. . . . We could not fail. A few days, a few days only, separated us from victory. . . ." That trust faded with the days, turned into despair.

For sixty-three days, Mme. Orska served as nurse in different sectors of the city. She moved through sewers, battling their inhuman stench and the overpowering gas, to succor the wounded. Beside her, love blossomed and died. Around her, little tragedies occurred almost every moment. Spies were found among the women spreading pleas for surrender, beside brave men and women who dared the impossible and achieved the superhuman. Her own small daughter insisted on staying by her side until almost the very end. While buildings crashed and shells dismembered bodies, while the Soviets still stood silent across the river, Viktor, one of Mme. Orska's fighting companions, had the courage to say, "It's a new era that'll begin when this war is over. I doubt whether the nations will ever fall out again after what they've gone through together to beat Germany."

The weeks wore on. Ammunition became precious. The water mains dried. Food was rationed. Medical supplies were exhausted. The odor of death was everywhere. The rattle of warfare in sections of the city where the fighting was concentrated stopped, and the stopping emphasized the silence of the Russian Army at the Vistula. The strength of the people ebbed until it could no longer continue. Then, and then only, did they capitulate. By the thousands they were moved to a nearby concentration camp, in so poor and suffering a state that occasional German soldiers were moved to give them food. And then, when full surrender came, they were dispersed among nearby villages. Mme. Orska was moved with them and eventually fled to the United States.

Here is history in its focal setting. Mme. Orska does not lose the continuity of her story despite the speed and barrage-like movements of the action that takes place. The story moves rapidly, excitingly.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Rogue, Winter's Tale. 2. Conjuror, Henry VI. 3. Weaver, Midsummer Night's Dream. 4. Slave, Tempest. 5. Prophetess, Troilus & Cressida. 6. Tinker, Taming of the Shrew. 7. Poet, Julius Caesar. 8 Constable, Much Ado About Nothing. 9. Courtesan, Henry IV. 10. Woman's tailor, Henry IV. 11. Bellows-mender, Midsummer Night's Dream. 12. Witch, Macbeth. 13. Schoolmaster, Love's Labour's Lost. 14. Steward, Twelfth Night. 15. Tavern-hostess, Henry IV. 16. Waiting-maid, Merchant of Venice. 17. Shepherdess, As You Like It. 18. Carpenter, Midsummer Night's Dream. 19. Country Justice, Merry Wives of Windsor. 20. Money-lender, Merchant of Venice. 21. Joiner, Midsummer Night's Dream. 22. Tailor, Midsummer Night's Dream. 23. Butler, The Tempest. 24. Clown, As You Like It. 25. Jester, The Tempest.

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Composers as Correspondents

LETTERS OF COMPOSERS. An Anthology edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1946. 417 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by IRVING KOLODIN

THE book begins with Jan Sweelinck of Amsterdam writing, in 1603, to the officials of his native city: "So great is the correspondence between music and the soul that many, seeking out the essence of the latter, have thought it to be full of harmonious accords, to be, indeed, a pure harmony." It ends with David Diamond of Rochester, New York, writing from Paris in 1939 (to "an unnamed recipient" on the Continent): "Don't get too fascinated by those attractive Hungarian girls and glittering night spots. I like you too."

If the chasm between seems wide indeed, it is not too wide to be bridged by the total reach of the other ninety-seven composers whose selected correspondence makes up this absorbing volume compiled by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. Those selections range from the supplicating to the superficial, from the overburdened to the undernourished, from the defiant to the defeated.

But it also shows in a manner more graphic than I know of, in any formal study, the emergence of the composer from a menial of princes to a modern man in a modern world. Perhaps his fate was in neither situation what he would have preferred, or even what he deserved, but at least the terms of address were different.

In the beginning, whether it was Heinrich Schütz writing to a forgotten elector of Saxony, or Haydn to the managers of the Esterházy estate, it was in terms of "I most humbly supplicate" or "I most respectfully submit." When Robert Russell Bennett, in 1943, had occasion to reply to a letter from the National Orchestral Association in response to an unsigned request for biographical information, he felt sufficiently certain of himself, sufficiently convinced of his independent existence as a free spirit to add the words: "I was born in Kansas City in 1894, studied composition with Carl Busch and Nadia Boulanger, married in 1919 in New York, have one daughter who is in Hollywood now—and died when I saw you forgot to sign your letter."

Perhaps it was no studied intention of the editors to weave this particular thread into the loose webbing of their volume, but the fact is they have provided "Letters of Composers" with an accessory interest not often present in anthologies. Like most examples of the kind, there is too much of what one doesn't want, too little of what one does. Just as one becomes interested in the intelligent prose of some such minor master as Glinka or Chabrier, for example, one turns the page expectantly for more, and is plunged into the relatively dull Mendelssohn or Dvorak whose chronological occurrences entitle them to the next few pages.

Along the way the panorama provides such items as Bach complaining that a dearth of fees from playing at funerals during a certain year has sharply depleted his income; Tartini expounding a point of violin

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By Erich Hesse, M.D.

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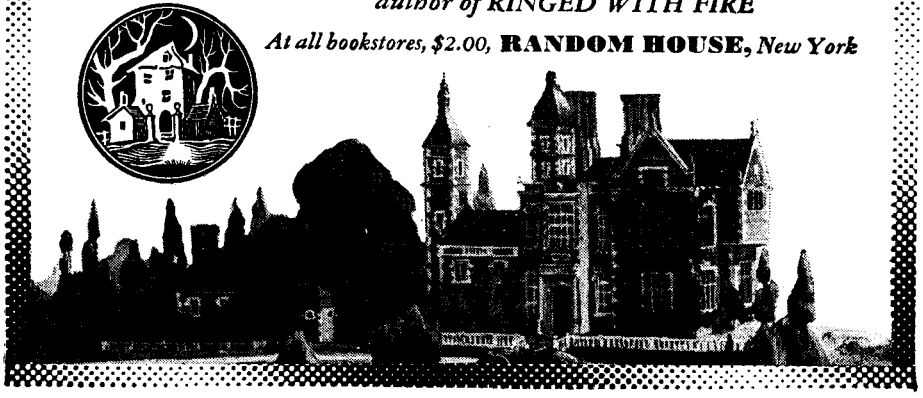

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technique as true today as when he wrote it two hundred years ago; Clementi gloating over a hard bargain he had driven with Beethoven on behalf of a London publisher; Spohr complaining of the "hellish noise" of "Tannhäuser"; Liszt expressing a magnificently appropriate estimate of Schumann; and the same Schumann, in the most intuitive phrase in the book, writing of Schubert: "There is no other music that presents so bewildering a *psychological* problem in its train of ideas." Italics mine, and emphatically so. Query to the authors: Did Schumann use a word with exactly this meaning or merely one which could be interpreted as having the contemporary significance of that very term?

As the book comes down to modern times, one is conscious of inhibiting factors—the reluctance of living composers to permit the use of material potentially valuable to themselves or their heirs; their unwillingness, further, to release correspondence uncomfortably frank in its appraisal of other contemporaries.

There are, however, notable exceptions, such as Virgil Thomson's pointed condemnation, in a letter to Aaron Copland, of the latter's "What to Listen for in Music"; Randall Thompson's well-phrased lament, in a letter to Douglas Moore, on the "decay of a noble art" (criticism as practised in the New York dailies); and the remarkably naïve Roy Harris's estimate of how a popular song becomes popular.

From the vast mass of material at their disposal, the editors have produced a book which is informative and readable, useful as well as comprehensive. There is at least another volume of similar size in the letters they have decided not to include, but the sources of their choice are clearly indicted. The present volume includes a comprehensive index.

William Morris Revalued

WILLIAM MORRIS, MEDIEVALIST AND REVOLUTIONARY. By Margaret R. Grennan. New York: King's Crown Press. 1946. 184 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by CARL P. ROLLINS

THE medieval monk who wrote "Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeclum in favilla" was neither the first nor the last despairing intellectual to lament the state of the world. Indignation with the cruelty and oppression of man has led for centuries to preoccupation with a hereafter free from misery, but it has also inflamed the minds of enthusiasts to seek some solution which might emancipate living men.

Of these prophets of a better day here and now was William Morris, who combined a knowledge of the Middle Ages with a zest for reform in the present. To his contemporaries it seemed curious that the Middle Ages, generally thought a time of ignorance and cruelty and bigotry, could furnish the inspiration for a better life here on earth, and most people today may feel exactly the same way.

To Mrs. Grennan this apparent paradox does not seem irreconcilable, nor, indeed, does it to anyone who, not hypnotized by our mechanized "progress," will read Morris attentively. The author of the doctoral thesis makes much of the fact that Morris was no dilettante in this matter. His knowledge of the Middle Ages was profound and accurate, though he was not a historian. He drew inspiration from his knowledge, and in particular the intimate study of life in medieval England revealed to his poetic imagination ways and means by which something of the pleasure of life, the salvation of hand work with tools rather than with machines, the superiority of brotherhood to caste and wage slavery, might be restored to a world which somehow took the wrong track when the Middle Ages were unable to grapple with a rapidly expanding world of thought and action. Something of the same dilemma faces us today, and if Morris did not choose to "go back" but rather to go forward in a definite rejection of certain modern concepts (*e.g.*, capitalistic exploitation), his ideals of a reformed society (revolutionary is perhaps the better term) have more cogent validity than they did fifty years ago.

Mrs. Grennan's book is somewhat unnecessarily long, but it is worth reading. As becomes such a study, there are ample notes and bibliography and index. It is heartening to see Morris treated with clarity and enthusiasm as well as with fairness and intelligence. The author has understood the profound basis of Morris's revolutionary tactic and, in addition, writes sympathetically and shrewdly.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER IN THE ROUGH *Leslie Allen* (Five Star: Two-bits*)	Bulky, golf playing detective Napoleon B. Smith and his Boswell unravel deaths on links and elsewhere.	Actual going almost as heavy as mythical bulk of Mr. Smith. Attempts at humor also elephantine and action hectic but unconvincing.	*Dear at the price
THE LATE LAMENTED LADY *Marie Blizard* (Mystery House: $2.)	Bride of returned war veteran stabbed with kitchen knife in bedroom. Mac Bronson, F.B.I.-on-leave, does the deducing.	Well enough plotted and logically solved, but strangely lacking in action and impact.	Static
CATS DON'T NEED COFFINS *D. B. Olsen* (Crime Club: $2.)	Murders on "baronical" establishment in California involve very queer doll, flower seeds, cat yclept Samantha, Sheriff Butterworth, and Sleuthess Rachel Murdock.	Title rather dragged in by Samantha's tail; murders effectively baffling, characters exotic, and Miss Murdock's sleuthing perceptive.	Agreeable
PUZZLE FOR FIENDS *Patrick Quentin* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Sleuth Duluth loses memory after accident and wakes up as million-dollar catspaw in neurotic and murderous household.	Duluth's didoes with sultry females, his amnesiac deducings, and completely surprising solution make easy, if wacky, reading.	Triumphant silliness
CORPSE ESCORT *Clifford Knight* (McKay: $2.)	Two stranglings, a knifing, and other skulduggeries solved handily by Prof. Huntoon Rogers—surrounded by movie people.	Murderer with screw loose in brain plants one corpse in coffin and otherwise disports himself in rather brittle and unconvincing tale.	Run-of-the-mill

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(*Continued from page 5*)

freedom in order to meet the threat. But when the war is over or the flood has passed, the mill-owner wants to be free to shut down if business looks bad; laborers want a 40-hour week and the right to limit their membership; the farmer wants to raise whatever crop he chooses, regardless of the general need for it. This, obviously, enormously increases the problem of keeping the industrial and agricultural machine running at top speed.

The people of Europe and England seem to have faced this problem and decided that they want security so much that they will take their chances on individual freedom. Political observers seem agreed that everything east of the Danube has gone over to political and economic communism lock, stock, and barrel. West of the Danube and in England, the trend seems to be clearly toward economic socialism and political democracy. The United States, which we have always thought of as the progressive country, the New World, suddenly finds itself as the last great conservative country on earth.

Perhaps as a result of this the controversy which has sprung up in the United States over this question has a quality which, so far as I can make out from my reading, is curiously defeatist and therefore surprisingly un-American. Both sides seem to take it for granted that any system which can give us full production must, inevitably, apparently by some divine law, destroy individual freedom. So we get this situation:

At one end of the scale stand the Communists, insisting that man acts from only economic motives; therefore security is so important that if it can only be had at the price of losing free speech, free religion, free thought, then it's too bad but we must give up freedom. At the other end are the rabid champions of freedom insisting that it is so important that we must have it even if the cost includes depressions with 10 million unemployed. In between are the moderates who are willing to trade some degree of freedom for a corresponding degree of security.

Almost no one seems to be asserting the proposition which I believe to be true—that Americans are smart enough, if they want to do it, to find a way to insure full production without any unreasonable loss of freedom.

If they want to do it! That's the crux of the matter. Americans have always obtained what they really wanted. They established freedom of religion when the official wise men of Europe were sure that to permit heresy would destroy any community. They established political democracy when the same wise ones were sure it would end in mob rule and anarchy. Let's take a more recent example, one you know about.

You once told me that at the turn of this century the founders of our automobile industry figured out that they were faced by a seemingly insoluble dilemma. In order to bring the price of cars down to a reasonable price, they had to be produced by mass production methods. But the purchasing power didn't exist to justify mass production; there weren't enough people who could afford to pay even the mass production price.

But these men really wanted an automobile industry, and they didn't waste time proving the impossibility of their position. They went to work to create the necessary purchasing power. Henry Ford, for example, established the highest minimum wage scale known up to that time. Then he offered cars at a price that would show him a profit at medium production but promised a substantial rebate if enough people bought his cars to give him the lowered costs of full production. And he paid that rebate.

Most important, these men saw that if they could get the industry rolling it would by itself increase enormously the number of possible purchasers. So they made it roll and set up an installment buying system, taking the chance that they could create the prosperity to enable buyers to make good on their installment contracts. And the buyers did make good.

I repeat: the crux of the matter

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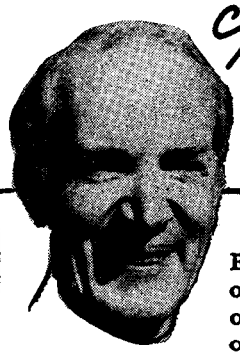

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is whether we want to solve the problem. If we do want to, we'll solve it. Personally, I don't believe we'd find the solution so extraordinarily difficult. But we must want it in the full sense of being willing to get up and give some of our personal time and effort to the solution.

If we did this, I'm inclined to think we'd all be not only better off but a lot happier. And why shouldn't we take some personal pride in our country's achievements? Other peoples can. When the Russians build a great dam, every Russian takes an individual pride in it. When we build TVA most of us grumble at the tax cost. Why should that be? How can we ever hope to prove to the world that America is the hope of mankind so long as that kind of thing happens? Can't someone give us back our old pride in the accomplishments of the community, state, and nation of which we are a part?

Sincerely,

JIM

GEORGE handed back the letter. "All right," he said, "I'm convinced. I agree we ought to have a national objective. I wish I could be the man to stir up a passionate enthusiasm for it. But what can one lone individual do?"

"There is your generation's defeatism again," answered Mr. Partrick. "Always ready to admit you can't do the things that ought to be done."

"Now, listen," George remonstrated, "you must concede that this isn't a one-man job. No one man could have the capability; he couldn't grasp all the problems, let alone work out the solutions. Certainly it's no job for an unknown tax accountant like myself. I'd simply make a fool of myself."

Mr. Partrick looked at him almost sadly before replying.

"There was once an unknown camel-driver named Mohammed who undertook to construct a whole new religion. He wasn't afraid of making a fool of himself. A man named Oliver Cromwell put into effect the idea, considered preposterous at the time, of making military promotions dependent on ability instead of birth and made all his soldiers cut their hair to give outward evidence of equality. Somehow or other he survived the scorn and ridicule. A lonely scholar in Germany named Marx invented a whole new system of political economy, with some holes in it so big that a high-school student of today can point them out. Neither his loneliness nor the errors has stopped the major economic revolution of our time from happening."

"No," he went on, "don't give me that age-old excuse of the impotence of the individual. I don't want to hear it from you or from any other member of your generation. I used it myself, and I know now, too late, the

deadening effect. It leads to the easy rationalization that your first obligation is to protect the present financial standard of your family, and in the time left over—which somehow or other is never there—you can work for the common good, and then, of course, only as a lieutenant of someone who really 'knows.' That's why I said at the outset that your generation was dull, diffident, and selfish.

"Good God, man, stop reading misinformation about your contemporaries and look at them instead. Look at the politicians, industrialists, labor leaders, scientists, artists, and pastors that you know. Concede, if you insist, that they know more about their particular specialties than you will ever know. But can you believe for one moment that they know more about the overall purposes of man than you may know? Can you think of any one of them more competent to crusade for a national ideal than you are or, for that matter, 20 other men and women you know who, like yourself, fear to step forth and make one unselfish appeal? Fear it because they might risk losing a little admiration and the financial security they now possess. Are we men and women or are we children clinging to what is left of our inheritance while the pioneers in far-off lands break through the old intellectual frontiers, unmindful of the hatred, contumely, and ridicule heaped upon them? If democracy is the glorification of the individual man, then let's be individuals and men, not a herd of children frightened at the very thought of working for anything but personal gratification."

"Damn it all," said George with sudden bitterness, "I wish I could do something. I must confess I hate to think of spending the rest of my life aimlessly repeating without real purpose the few things I've learned to do reasonably well. I'm afraid there is neither personal satisfaction nor happiness in that."

Mr. Partrick's expression suddenly changed. He looked almost gentle; he also looked, for once, all of his 70 years.

"I regret to say," he answered, "that *I* can personally assure you that that fear is well grounded. Avoid it while there is still time."

Commuters in Australia

SUN ON THE HILLS. By Margaret Trist. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1946. 242 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD AMSTER

THE author of "Sun on the Hills" is in that category of writers who do not belabor their thesis. She tells a slight story in easy, natural fashion, allowing her implications to filter through rather than underscoring them. The town and townspeople of Upper Glen, a small settlement in the mountains of Australia, are of a kind not to be burdened with out-of-the-way occurrences or to recognize them as especially significant. Life is lived very simply there, and, when it takes a drastic course, Miss Trist is wise enough to relate it to the whole of life rather than to reduce it to an individual phenomenon.

There are types such as are found in every community in the world: the snob, the garrulous woman, the slattern, the slut (there are several of these, belonging to a single family), and, less sharply delineated, their men who escape on daily trips to the city and thus seem to avoid the necessity of becoming "characters." The catalytic agent which speeds up the chemical reactions of these people to one another and particularly within themselves is Jimmy Blair, home on final leave before going with his unit to the fighting front. It is natural that such a young man, with the double urgency of having reached the first fullness of manhood and of being aware that the time to enjoy it is limited and possibly to be abruptly terminated, will crystallize in a marked way the emotions of those with whom he comes in contact. His attentions are centered on an eighteen-year-old girl in whom ignorance and fear of life effect a priggishness and the kind of reserve that send him into the willing arms of a less exacting girl. The battle lines are drawn for the poor fellow for whom social distinctions and conventions can have little meaning, and who has not much longer to wait for serious battle. Skirmishes occur, slight wounds are inflicted, and victory is won during the brief week end, since that is all the time allowed to him. It is an amusing conflict, described with urbanity, excellent characterizations, and a suggestion of Australian mores that, although younger and less formalized, are not importantly different from our own.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM, NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		REMARKS
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
SCHUMANN, DER NUSSBAUM; STILLE TRÄNEN. Marian Anderson, Franz Rupp. Victor 11-9173 $1	Fine, full tone in piano accomp. but it should be stronger, especially in Schumann, where piano is solo part. And Anderson could be recorded farther from mike, at lower level.	A—	Anderson is best in "Der Nussbaum," not as good in the exacting, personal mood of "Stille Tränen." Vocally beautiful, but subtle harmonic implications are not realized. Drags.
PROKOFIEFF, OVERTURE ON HEBREW THEMES op. 34. Wm. Nowinski, vl. Vivian Rivkin, pf. & strings. DISC 4020 (1 *plastic*) $2.25	Excellent music for recording purposes (see *SRL* last week.) Good, easy-to-listen-to instrumental balance. DISC plastic is improving.	A (plastic)	This sextet was written in the Bronx in 1933. A good score, refreshingly short. Interesting mixture of chunky Prokofieff and exotic Hebrew melody, with fine variety of tone color.

NEEDLES

REQUESTS are coming in for information on needles, pick-ups, record players, and the like. I can't get involved in recommending brand names without becoming a second Consumer's Research. Impossible—but I'm glad to give the results of personal experience for what they may be worth.

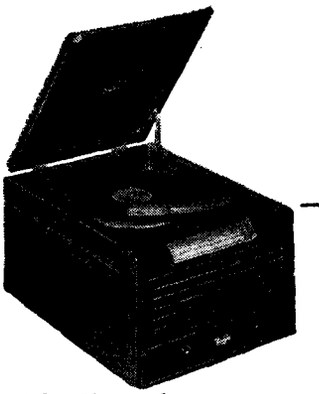
If you must change your needle frequently, the steel needles with the thin hardened point set into a thicker shank seem the best. Change at least every other side; better to waste needles than to risk records. The biggest problem is telling the sheep from the goats. I usually snap the point off every old one to see that it doesn't get back into use again (but be sure to cover the operation with your hand, in case the point flies up!). If you hold a bad needle to the light and turn it slowly, two bright twinkles prove it's used, in case you've accidentally poured them all in the same box. An advantage of these, not mentioned by the makers, is that if dropped heavily on the record the point breaks clean, making only a tiny scar instead of a nasty dig.

I personally prefer the semi-permanent needle for any machine that has a removable needle system. I still use straight ones, have no opinion as to qualities of the fancy S-curve variety. In any case every permanent should have one side of the shank flat, so that it always screws into the same position in the pick-up. That minimizes the worst danger, re-inserting a used needle in a different position. Of the two types, jewel and metal point, I prefer the metal, simply because it's less delicate. The elaborately advertised jewels are ideally best, but they have one big weakness—they are necessarily held in a metal clasp. The slightest mistreatment knocks the jewel out or, worse, chips off a piece, leaving a fine razor-like jagged edge. And so unless you are the type with habitually careful fingers, keep away from the removable jewel needles. I wouldn't trust one in a changer either—but then I wouldn't trust a changer with anything I really valued. I am open to persuasion on this.

The hard metal semi-permanent needle is to my mind the best bet, because it's much less subject to damage in normal rough treatment. If you drop it heavily it will dig you a fine hole, but usually will not be hurt. Some types tend to bend to one side under a sudden jar, and a bent needle can do a good deal of harm.

But what makes more difference than all the needles put together is the *weight* of your pick-up, especially on the new plastic records. The standard pre-war crystal pick-up weighed around two ounces; some of the newest are very much lighter. By all means get a very light pick-up. The one factor of weight far outbalances in my experience all others. With a pick-up of less than an ounce it is hard even deliberately to hurt a record, and your records will last forever. Contrary to what you might think, the light pick-up does not jump grooves in the loud spots. It will take a louder passage than the old heavyweights, and the annoying needle "chatter" is considerably less.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.



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the Phoenix Nest

TALISMAN

Sometimes when I think of love I
  catch my breath
To know how frail a thread must
  bridge the space
From heart to heart: what valor
  looks at death
And turns its steadfast gaze upon his
  face.
Love will dare anything that man
  will dare:
It is not stripped from him like pride,
  like hate.
Whatever else of courage he may wear
This love alone will mark and make
  him great.
Sometimes when I think of love I
  pause and wonder
Of what bright element a man is made
That he can stand unvanquished by
  the thunder
Of crashing worlds, intrepid, unafraid,
Until I see (and then I understand)
That shieldless, like young David, he
  can go,
The round smooth stone of Love warm
  in his hand.
I look at him, and suddenly I know.

ELEANOR ALLETTA CHAFFEE.

* * *

"Some time ago," writes Mrs. Edward N. Hay of Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, "I read a request in your column for a grown-up magic book by 'E. Nesbit.' I have come across a book published as 'Rose Royal' in this country by Dodd, Mead & Co. in 1912, copyright 1911 as 'Dormant.' Perhaps it is just as well that it is not well-known; a grown-up's pretense hasn't the gay quality of childhood's. Is there a biography of E. Nesbit?"

Earle Walbridge, front and center. And, indeed, what should arrive in the mail but the following communiqué:

Back to Keats. Basil Davenport reviewing Denton Welch's "In Youth Is Pleasure" (*SRL* June 22), paraphrases a "passage somewhere in Keats's letters which I have not been able to verify." The reason for his failure is that it occurs in the preface to "Endymion." I first encountered

it in the first volume of Compton Mackenzie's "Sinister Street" (called "Youth's Encounter" in the U.S.), where it was used as an epigraph. "The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted; thence proceeds mawkishness."

Ah, youth, youth! I defy any seeker after truth on Fourth Avenue to match my recent killing (for the invariable dime). I'll copy the title-page: "The Resolute Mr. Pansy; an Electrical Story for Boys, by John Trowbridge, Professor of Physics, Harvard University, Author of 'The Electrical Boy.' Boston, Little, Brown, and Company" (they took it over from Roberts Brothers, who made a pretty penny publishing Louisa Alcott). Sample passage:

> "I am afraid there is candy in your hat, Mr. Pansy," said she, stepping into the darkness. "I was told that those rude boys put some in it."
>
> "It will be a sweet memento of the evening," replied her companion gayly. "Boys will be boys, you know."

Prof. Trowbridge didn't write "Cudjo's Cave"; that was John Townsend Trowbridge. I live in hope of finding another of his books entitled "Philip's Experiments; or Physical Science at Home" (1898).

Tying up three of the poets you spoke of recently: Richard Hovey wrote "Seward; an Elegy on the Death of Thomas William Parsons," and Curtis Hidden Page, in a *catalogue raisonné* of his books, called it the best elegy yet written in America. (I cast my ballot for "Thorstan's Friend.") Hovey must have been in a dilemma; he couldn't very well call the elegy "Wellward," yet Parsons's body was found in a Scituate (Mass.) well, where he had fallen in a fit of apoplexy. (See Professor McKenzie's article on Parsons in the "Dictionary of American Biography.") I must ask the Will Irwins, now at their summer home in Scituate, about that. Remember your piece a year ago about the Memorial Day celebration in Rockport? Phyllis Duganne, Inez Haynes Irwin's niece, had a charming story on a similar theme in *This Week*, the latter part of May. When the Irwins left New York I fell heir to an armful of their books, among them a sort of American counterpart of "Phra the Phoenician." It is Edward Eyre Hunt's "Greathouse" (Harcourt, 1937). The hero ages only five years in every quarter-century, so his life-span easily extends from Salem witchcraft times to the First World War. The Aaron Burr-Blennerhassett episode is extremely well done; it's an incident that has interested me ever since I read old Charles Felton Pidgin's "Blennerhassett; or, The Decrees of Fate" (1901).

The most startling spectre in August Derleth's new anthology "Who Knocks?" (Rinehart) is May Sinclair. Why is Mr. Derleth so certain that she died in 1943? I can find no record anywhere else, and her name is in the current "Who's Who." I feel in duty bound to add that I learn by underground from California that Mr. Ed Morrell, original reincarnation dreamer of Jack London's "The Star Rover," is alive and in excellent health in Hollywood, not dead as reported in a recent Nest.

* * *

THE LATE MR. NOBODY

Here was a man whom fortune had
  not known,
(First Mourner: Well, he's changed
  his luck at last.)
Whose seeds of effort fell on barren
  stone.
(Second Mourner: Yes, his misery is
  past.)
His life was dreams and doubt and
  poverty.
(Third Mourner: Who will foot the
  funeral bills?)
And even loneliness and celibacy.
(Fourth Mourner: No estate, no heirs,
  no wills.)

But he had been a brother to the
  night—
(Landlady: No, "No kin," he would
  insist.)
Midas of stars, lord of their jewel
  light—
(A gossip: Why, he was an *atheist.)*
Drinker of rapture from the moon's
  own bowl.
(The preacher: God have mercy on
  his soul!)

JOHN NIXON, JR.

* * *

And the following is from Ann Hart of Northampton, if I have successfully deciphered all of it:

> In your quoted descriptions of the young Swinburne, I was interested to see that you did not identify Sir John Swinburne as the friend and patron of the group of young writers round Leigh Hunt and the *Examiner*. Sir John Swinburne offered money and friendship to Leigh Hunt and respect for the groups of radicals who visited the "wit in the dungeon," as Byron called L. H. Leigh Hunt's third son, the one born soon after he was released

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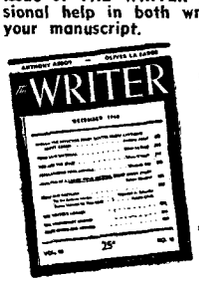

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from prison, was called Swinburne, as a sort of acknowledgment of Sir John's attentions. No one who likes to walk again through the early nineteenth century but remembers the grandfather with kindness and forgives some of Algernon's excesses for the sake of this generous, even noble, grandfather.

Probably Algernon inherited from him his own excessively generous temperament, for no one praised other writers with more lavish abandon than Swinburne, though, on the other hand, his invective could be matchless.

* * *

I shall give the last word this week to the wandering poet Welborn Hope:

THE HOME-TOWN PAPER

I do not know why I haunt Times Square
To buy the paper from back there—
Since time cut most, and I cut the rest
Of all the ties I had with the West.
My death-time tears are wept and done.
From youth and sorrow into the sun
I stepped, and I count as rather grand
My liberation from that land.

In New York leaps my fresh desire,
My spirit quickens with new fire;
I know I shall not see again
The oil-fields and the seas of grain,
Where gas-flares and wild redbuds vie
Garish beneath a purple sky,
And mockingbirds sing through the gale
Of sassafras on the Chisholm Trail.

Nostalgia murmurs, but it knows
I will not quit New York for those:
Though long-known print in Times Square brings
Odors and echoes of old springs;
And like a lone ghost lost in space
My paper is a dead friend's face.

* * *

Yet I am not strictly accurate because, before I close, it has suddenly occurred to me to call to your attention one of the greatest humorous books of the past about pirates, even surpassing certain yarns by Frank R. Stockton. It is by Ralph Bergengren, and called, "Gentlemen All and Merry Companions."

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 642)

FINLEY P. DUNNE [Mr. Dooley]:

Dissertations [Senatorial Courtesy]

*A senator may go to sleep and swallow his teeth while another senator is making a speech . . . but if you attack that palladium of our liberties, the sacred right to drool, they rally at once. It's a question of *senatorial courtesy.*

*Anglicized.

PERSONALS

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(Continued on page 34)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 33)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 643

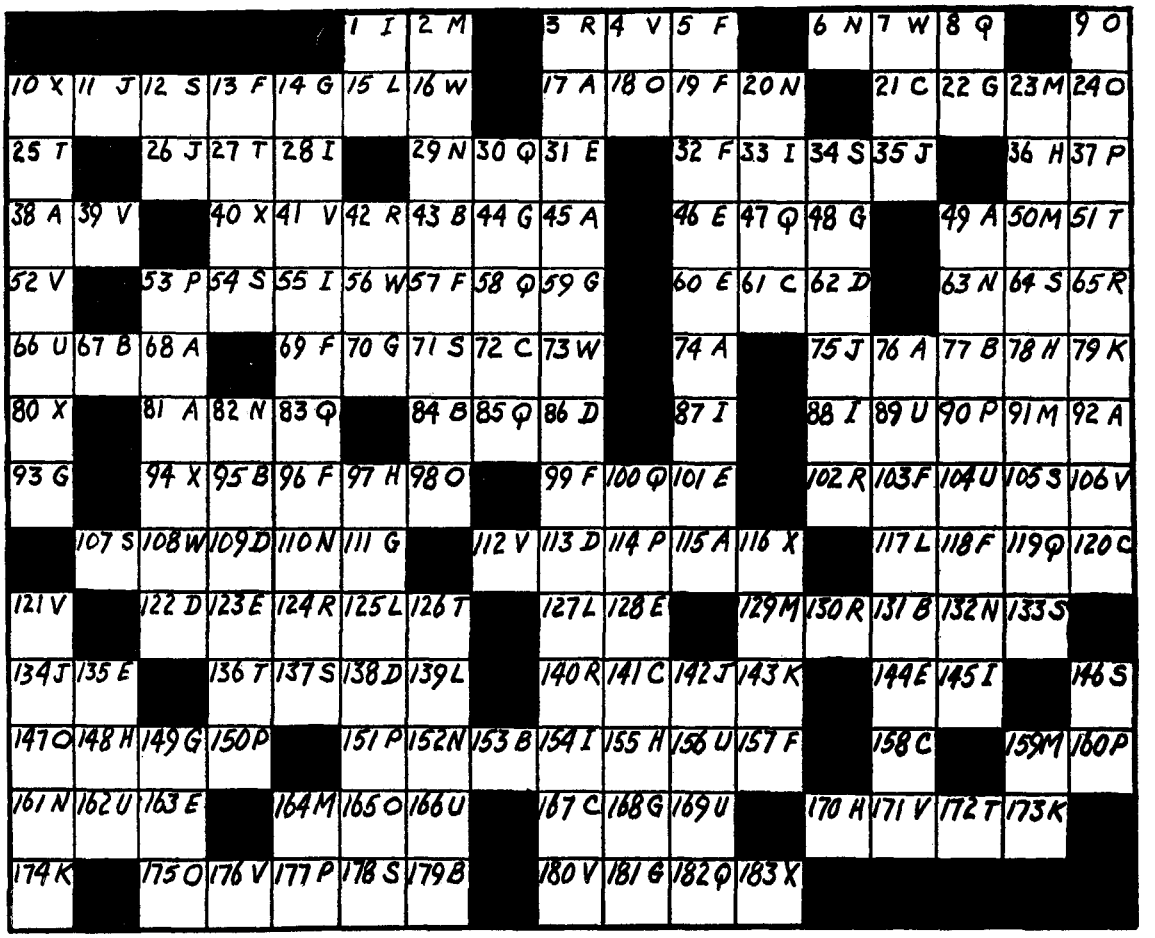
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. A word difficult to pronounce (Slang).	49 38 45 81 68 92 74 17 115 76
B. A type of prolonged metaphor ("The Faerie Queene").	84 43 95 67 131 77 153 179
C. Last book of the Old Testament.	72 158 120 167 21 61 141
D. Lyric poems in which a longer verse is followed by a shorter one (Horace).	109 113 138 86 62 122
E. Laws or policies of government as contrasted with those of folk.	128 135 46 60 101 123 144 163 31
F. In this way and that; explained in detail (3 wds.)	99 103 13 32 96 19 5 118 157 57 69
G. To maintain one's position (3 wds.)	59 181 22 48 149 168 14 111 44 70 93
H. Not traversed.	155 78 36 148 170 97
I. Lively dance with a jumpy step for one couple, popular in 17th and 18th Centuries.	55 1 88 87 28 33 154 145
J. Dickens character who was "willin'."	75 26 11 142 134 35
K. Famous Hebrew scribe and priest of 5th Cent. B.C. (Hagiographa).	143 79 173 174
L. Large and often motley collections of things or peopeople (Colloq.)	15 127 125 139 117
M. Numbered and set apart (2 wds.)	2 23 129 91 50 159 164
N. A mood of arrogance (2 wds.)	132 6 20 152 29 82 110 63 161
O. The external integument of the body.	165 9 18 24 98 147 175
P. Pares.	150 37 160 151 53 90 114 177
Q. Boston banker and philanthropist, founder of Boston Symphony Orchestra (1834-1919).	100 30 58 83 119 47 8 182 85
R. Malevolent feeling (2 wds.)	124 3 140 102 130 42 65
S. One thing and another (3 wds.)	133 137 64 12 71 34 107 105 54 146 178
T. Hero of "The Great Stone Face."	25 51 27 172 136 126
U. Cattle dealing.	169 162 89 66 104 166 156
V. Preaching or promulgation of the gospel.	106 171 41 52 39 4 121 176 112 180
W. To prevent; prohibit (Law).	108 16 7 56 73
X. Full of furrows and ridges.	183 10 40 94 80 116

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 33 of this issue.

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